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The Shape of Things

THE ATMOSPHERE OF A PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM mystery still hangs over the events leading to the downfall of Laval, but General de Gaulle's scornful phrase, "a palace revolution," seems the best summary of what has occurred. The Vichy government is a nest of intriguers, all reactionary but each fighting for his own hand. Since none has any popular following, each must try to capture the support of Marshal Pétain, the one really national figure in the government. And since power in France now rests ultimately on German approval, each must curry favor with the Nazis. Laval, an extremely cunning politician, grasped the situation early and maneuvered himself into the key positions, becoming Vice-Premier and heir-apparent, Foreign Minister and controller of press and radio. In his negotiations with the Nazis he was prepared to meet almost any demands, but Pétain, while ready for a large measure of collaboration, drew the line at taking part actively in the war. Thus Laval found his own standing with the Nazis imperiled by inability to deliver on his promises and attempted through a coup to gain full control of the government. He overreached himself, however, and gave an opening to his enemies in the Cabinet which they were not slow to seize.

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THE APPOINTMENT OF FLANDIN, AN OLD apostle of appeasement, is an indication that no drastic change in policy is intended. But the problem of reconciling Nazi demands for an active instead of a passive anti-British policy with Pétain's rigid ideas of the limits imposed by national interest and honor remains to be solved. That is why Herr Abetz has hastened to Vichy. Hints have meanwhile appeared in the German press that sterner measures—even full occupation of the country—may follow if Vichy continues to be unaccommodating. At the same time, better terms may be offered to France for a military alliance now that Italy has proved a broken reed. But could any government carry the French people, who did not want to fight against Germany, into a war on the side of Germany? It seems very unlikely after France has experienced six months of the "New Order."

LORD LOTHIAN WILL BE HARD TO REPLACE, for he had become popular in Washington and the straightforward way in which he put the British case in press interviews and speeches made it impossible to paint British propaganda as a sinister mystery. His last address was a frank appeal for aid coupled with a reasoned argument for the belief that the fates of British and American democracy cannot be separated. His death at a time when vital negotiations were in progress is a severe blow to Britain. It is necessary to name a successor quickly but hard to find the right man. The new ambassador ought to be someone who knows America well, whose devotion to democracy is beyond doubt, and who is able to interpret for us the social renaissance which is growing in Britain under the rain of bombs. Few of the men mentioned in press speculations here and in London seem to measure up to this specification. One name heavily tipped is that of Sir Andrew Duncan, now Minister of Supply, who seems to us an almost perfect example of the wrong man for the job. He is an able business man, corporation lawyer, and organizer of industrial combinations who would no doubt feel at home in the Bankers' Club but would be unlikely to react sympathetically to the atmosphere of New Deal Washington. Nor should we feel more enthusiastic about Lord Halifax, to whom the aroma of appeasement still clings obstinately. Other names mentioned include Anthony Eden, David Lloyd George, and Sir Archibald Sinclair. Mr. Eden's prestige has risen since he took over the War Office, and he would be a popular choice in this country, but he is still a promising young man rather than a statesman. Mr. Lloyd George, in spite of his age, is a virile personality and would certainly be an eloquent spokesman for Britain. But probably the best of the three would be Sir Archibald Sinclair, who as leader of the Liberals has proved himself a militant and pertinacious democrat.

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THE GRAVE LAG IN OUR DEFENSE PROGRAM was revealed by William S. Knudsen speaking before the National Association of Manufacturers and in his letters to the managers and employees of the machine-tool industry. It should be a matter of concern to every American. Plane production, which was to have been

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1,000 a month by January 1, is still only about 700, and most of the planes now being put out are of the lighter variety. At least one important airplane factory is producing fewer planes than it was last year at this time. No more guns or machine-guns are being turned out now than six months ago. Four light tanks are being produced a day, but the larger medium tanks will not be available in quantity until next summer. At the same time Secretary Stimson revealed that delays in construction work in the camps would cause postponements of from one week to two and one-half months in calling up the National Guard and drafted men. Attempts are being made to blame the entire lag in defense on labor disputes, although Secretary Stimson declared that they were not responsible for one per cent of the delay in the camps, and there have been few labor difficulties elsewhere. Mr. Knudsen very sensibly asked why the national-defense plants should be blacked out from Friday to Monday. By some this will be taken as an argument for increasing the work week over the forty hours now provided by law. But machines can be put into continuous use without disturbing the basic work week for labor. As Mr. Knudsen declared, "we can train the men" to operate the machinery. It is up to management to make the arrangements.

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HOPE FOR REPEAL OF THE NEUTRALITY ACT in order to give increased aid to Great Britain is heightened by the forthright plea of Representative Sol Bloom, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, that it be rescinded immediately. At the same time Representative May, of the House Military Affairs Committee, has announced that he will introduce a bill on the first day of the next session to repeal the Johnson Act. Elimination of these two burdensome laws is clearly necessary if effective aid is to be given Great Britain in time to stave off Germany's spring offensive. Secretary Morgenthau very properly declared last week that he would not consider making a loan to Britain in the face of the clear prohibitions contained in these two laws. Subterfuges, however laudable in intention, should be avoided in a matter of such gravity. Congress alone has the authority to see that Britain receives the full assistance, short of war, that this country is capable of providing. In view of the emergency, it should face this issue before considering any other legislation.

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SWEETNESS AND LIGHT WAS THE DOMINANT theme of the annual Congress of Industry of the National Association of Manufacturers. The sweetness was reflected in the association's magnanimous offer to "cooperate" with local school authorities in finding a way by which the concept of private enterprise might be inculcated in the schools. Local business men were urged to "get in closer contact with school boards and individual teachers . . . for the discussion of mutual problems." Apparently the light is to be applied in the form of a torch to such of the 800 public-school textbooks as are found, with the assistance of Ralph W. Robey, to be "prejudicial to our form of government, our society, or to the system of free enterprise." Several officers of the association, speaking at the concluding meeting, urged its members to show personal evangelistic fervor in the great "crusade" which lies ahead. The purpose of this crusade is to convince the people that "free enterprise is the base and bulwark of all the freedoms of the common people." Behind this rather naive and unhistorical concept lay a none too well concealed determination to make use of the national emergency to check social gains of all types. To this end speakers urged, among other things, a weakening of the Wagner Act, abridgment of the right to strike during the emergency, and a broadening of the income-tax base, with higher rates in the lower brackets. A crusade, but hardly a new one!

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THE PLACING OF IRON AND STEEL PRODUCTS on the list of articles which can only be exported under license is apparently intended to serve as a warning to Japan rather than as an immediate bar to further aggression. Since the ban on the heavy grades of scrap iron went into effect some months ago, Japan has been buying abnormally large quantities of steel products. The current ruling does not stop shipment on Japanese purchases, but it limits future exports to the "usual or prewar exports" and gives the government power to clamp down on all exports in case of further Japanese depredations. No action has yet been taken to check the outflow of copper and zinc, although Japanese purchases of these metals are perhaps an even greater menace to our defense program than its purchase of steel. Within the past week Japan is reported to have been buying large stocks of copper, and its zinc purchases have forced a reduction in the output of a high-grade alloy steel badly needed for the defense program. As a result of the orders which have been issued by the President under the May Defense Act, the United States has gained the power to cripple Japan's war machine. But as long as we continue to provide oil, copper, zinc, lead, and a normal quota of iron and steel products, Foreign Minister Matsuoka can afford to say, as he did last week, that Tokyo will be the judge as to whether or not we are "minding our business" in aiding Great Britain.

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THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY OF SKINNING a cat or crippling an independent newspaper. The Chattanooga *News-Free Press* and two of its officers were convicted in the United States Circuit Court last week on

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charges of conspiracy to violate the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by writing advertising contracts which carried a clause stipulating that the firm involved could not advertise in any other afternoon newspaper in the field. George Fort Milton's new paper, the *Evening Tribune,* was taken into bankruptcy by this outrageous clause. His first paper, the *News*—now embalmed in the masthead of the *News-Free Press*—failed about a year ago as the result of a slightly different but just as effective attack. It had won the hatred of the power trust and assorted reactionaries by its vigorous support of the New Deal and particularly of the Tennessee Valley Authority. The TVA survived, but the *News* went under. The story of its strangulation was told in *The Nation* at the time. A hundred days later Mr. Milton launched the *Evening Tribune.* It lasted five months. Mr. Milton thereupon brought a complaint against the *Free Press* contracts. He won his point; it is, so far as we know, the first criminal conviction of a newspaper for unfair tactics, and it should discourage such practices. But the victory must seem rather empty to Mr. Milton, for Judge Darr of the Circuit Court blandly stated that in his opinion the clause had been inserted in the contract without intent or guilt of "any moral wrong" and fined the convicted corporation and its two officers one cent each. There is still freedom of the press in Chattanooga—for the *Free Press,* as long as it speaks for the right people.

*

TRADE UNIONS WHICH MAINTAIN CLOSED-shop contracts and then insist on high initiation fees from new members seem to us to be playing into the hands of the enemies of labor. A recent witness before the Tolan committee investigating the problems of migrant workers told how he had been asked to pay an initiation fee of $300 in order to join the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and so become eligible for a job at Fort Belvoir. C. F. Preller, representing Local 26 of the brotherhood, admitted, when called before the committee, that this was the regular fee, and explained the high level by saying they had found it insured "a better class of mechanics." They were willing, he continued, to accept $50 down and after that $1 a day until the $300 was paid off. Even with this concession the fee is prohibitive for a man who has been unemployed for any length of time and who has no guaranty that the job will last for more than a few weeks. Only a minority of unions appear to charge exorbitant entrance fees, but these have recently been in the limelight owing to the prevalence of the practice in unions with members working on defense building jobs. In many important organizations, both A. F. of L. and C. I. O., there is either no fee at all or merely a nominal one required as evidence of good faith. We believe unions which set up financial barriers to membership should reconsider their position. The practice has an unpleasant smell of medieval-guild monopoly.

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THE DETAILS OF VICHY'S ANTI-JEWISH LAWS as published in the *Journal Officiel* show them to be even more restrictive than was originally indicated. Everyone who has three Jewish grandparents, or two Jewish grandparents married to each other, is subject to the specified restrictions. Jews are barred from all elected bodies, from membership in the government, from judgeships, and from numerous specified administrative positions. They are not permitted to serve as officers in the army, navy, or police, and are barred altogether from the teaching profession. Entrance into other professional activities such as journalism, radio, and dramatics is severely restricted. About the only concession to the Jews which differs from the restrictions prevailing in Germany is permission to serve in the "liberal professions," subject to quota restrictions and a complete prohibition against their holding office in professional societies. If Herr Hitler has not yet ordered complete conformity with the Nürnberg decrees it is probably because he wishes to preserve German superiority in the arts of oppression.

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THAT HIGH-POWERED POLITICAL MACHINE of Wendell Willkie's which rode roughshod under all opposition a month ago is still going strong. And still in reverse. Shortly after the election the editor of *The Nation* received a note signed by Mr. Willkie advising her that a message which she never sent had "touched him deeply," had indeed conveyed "a heartening faith in the principles" for which he stood. Now the edge has been taken off this tribute by the revelation that equally warm messages have been going out to victorious Democratic candidates who somehow got on the Willkie mailing lists. These are nice form letters in which the Republican champion tells of his happiness on learning of the election of so-and-so and adds: "It was because of the splendid efforts of you and others on the firing line that the Republican Party made so good a showing." At least ten of these went out to triumphant Tammany men, who had the time of their lives drafting cute replies welcoming Willkie back to the Wigwam. It's all extravagantly unimportant, and we only mention it to show that when it comes to real starry-eyed botching the professors of the New Deal can't bat a lash in the company of the streamlined Willkie entourage.

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NO DOUBT NASSAU IS BORING; EX-KINGS, moreover, never figured in those lists we used to draw up in a happier day of the things we'd take to a desert island. We don't blame Wallis Windsor for using an

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infected wisdom tooth as an excuse to spend a few days in fabulous Florida. But when we note that the sedan carrying Wallis and her hard-won Duke from the hospital to a tower apartment in the Miami Biltmore Hotel for a post-operation "rest" was loaded with twenty-seven pieces of luggage—they were *not* marked Bundles for Britain—we can't help wondering how the news will be received in the shelters of London and the shambles of Coventry. It only remains for the Duchess to write a book on that old theme, "Did I ever tell you about my ostentation?"

The Italian Debacle

THE rout of the Italian army in Egypt following the equally spectacular defeat in Albania may prove to be the turning-point in the war. The German failures to carry Britain by assault when it was at its weakest last summer or to bomb it into surrender this fall were the first signs that the victorious onslaught of the Axis could be checked. But the Battle of Britain was essentially a defensive action, and wars are not won solely by defense. In Albania and Egypt, Greece and Britain have turned to the counter-offensive and have proved to the world that there is at least one weak spot in the totalitarian front.

Since Italy fought without assistance from its partner, it may seem that German prestige is not involved in the débâcle and that the Nazi war potential is not seriously weakened. But Germany in the recent past has made much of Britain's inability to assist invaded allies; now that argument will snap back in Hitler's face. The spirit of the conquered peoples will be reinforced. The neutral countries will be encouraged in their efforts to resist Axis pressure. The idea of inexorable destiny with which Hitler has attempted to endow his "New Order" has been challenged.

These are some of the wider consequences of the Italian defeats. There are also immediate strategic gains for Britain which are worth consideration. The foremost is the removal of the threat to the Suez Canal, which not long ago appeared to be in serious danger. Even if the pursuit of Graziani's legions is halted near the Libyan frontier, and even if Mussolini is able to send reinforcements across the dangerous narrows between Sicily and Tripoli, it will still be a long while before any new invasion of Egypt becomes practicable. The carefully prepared bases, the long-accumulated stores for that operation are in British hands. Tens of thousands of soldiers have been captured, and the morale of the whole Libyan army has suffered a wound which, at best, will take many months to heal. At the same time the supposed Axis plan for a flank attack on British positions in the Near East has been nipped in the bud. More than ever, the eastern Mediterranean is a British lake, and it will not be surprising if the Italian outpost in the Dodecanese Islands, now deprived of all hope of succor, surrenders in the near future.

The question is being asked: Will these disasters put Italy out of the war? The answer seems to depend largely on internal reactions. The frantic efforts of the Fascist press to minimize the British and Greek victories, while at the same time preparing the people for bad news, are good evidence of the disquiet felt in Rome. So too is the campaign which is being launched against the faint-hearted, the slack, and the "pro-British," and the attempts to rally the masses to the regime by the pretense that fascism is fighting in behalf of the revolutionary proletariat. But, despite censors, the news from Albania and Libya is spreading in Italy, and, despite propagandists, Italian enthusiasm for the war, never more than lukewarm, grows colder. All hopes of a short, cheap, and profitable war have faded. Frequent British raids on Turin and Naples are evidence that the country is not immune from attack; high prices and diminished rations are reminders of the power of the blockade.

The unpopularity of the war among Italians is one of the obstacles which Germany must face if it attempts to come to the rescue. Mussolini has lost face at home and abroad; he will lose more if too ostentatious assistance is pressed upon him. If German troops are sent to help out in Albania, their wearied and disheartened allies might gladly leave all the fighting to them, and to send any considerable force into Italy itself would be to invite popular uprisings and to promote disaffection in the Italian army. So far as Libya is concerned, the British fleet stands in the way of any sizable reinforcements, and the utmost that Germany could do would be to detach some part of its air force. But this in turn might mean lessening the pressure on the British Isles.

The extrication of the Italians in Albania would appear to demand the organization of a large-scale expedition and would require the use of a corridor through either Yugoslavia or Bulgaria or both. It seems unlikely that Yugoslavia would now acquiesce, and even Bulgaria is unwilling to risk war with Turkey in order to oblige the Axis. Thus a German attempt to outflank Greece through either of these two countries might provoke resistance on a scale which would call for really formidable numbers. It is an undertaking from which Hitler may well shrink, particularly in the depths of the Balkan winter, when conditions are a severe discouragement to *Blitzkrieg* tactics. Apart, then, from the dispatch of a moderate number of planes, there seems little that Germany can do at the present time to pull its partner out of the mire. The one possibility would be a diversion through Spain. But Italian troubles will hardly have increased Franco's eagerness to join the war, nor will they have reduced his price—a large chunk of

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French Africa. Laval, there is good reason to suppose, was willing to pay, but Laval is out, and that is a sign that Pétain will continue to draw a line when it comes to appeasement. He has one good card in his hand—Weygand's colonial army—and with most of the Italian trumps taken, that card has increased in value. So we see that the Italian defeats, which the German press pretends to regard with indifference, actually impose obstacles to a number of German moves. The first grand attempt to cut British imperial lines has failed. Once again it may be necessary to try a frontal attack on the main citadel, the strength of which is many times greater than it was six months ago.

Models to Avoid

IN THE last war the Department of Justice sought to keep control of prosecutions under the Epionage Act and similar statutes in its own hands. It not only tried to prevent separate action by the states but even instructed the various United States attorneys throughout the country not to submit such cases to a grand jury "without first obtaining the approval of the Attorney General." A circular sent out by the department to United States attorneys on May 23, 1918, explained that prosecutions of this kind "should not be permitted to become the medium whereby efforts are made to suppress honest, legitimate criticism of the Administration or of government policies; nor should it be permitted to become a medium for personal feuds or persecutions." The Department of Justice felt that "protection of loyal persons from unjust suspicion and prosecution is quite as important as the suppression of actual disloyalty." As former Attorney General Cummings and former Assistant Attorney General McFarland said in 1937 in their discussion of this period in their book "Federal Justice," such prosecutions are "a dangerous weapon in the hands of vindictive or fanatical prosecutors." Wilson's Attorney General, T. W. Gregory, did his best to prevent these abuses. Despite his efforts, as another of his war-time circulars (No. 851, on June 19, 1918) testifies, state authorities often made unauthorized arrests under federal law and held persons for "weeks and even months" without notifying the United States marshals or attorneys in their districts.

It was with a consciousness of these past abuses that on April 29 of this year Attorney General Jackson established the new "Neutrality Laws Unit," which was to have "responsibility for control of all prosecutive action growing out of violations or charges of violations of laws relating to neutrality, foreign enlistments, treason, sedition, espionage, sabotage, or kindred offenses." The dangers involved were noted by the Attorney General in his address to the conference of state law-enforcement officials held at the Department of Justice building in Washington last August. The Attorney General, particularly in connection with aliens, said that "hateful treatment or oppression or harassment would tend to make sullen enemies of those who wish to be good Americans and would make them a potential fifth column." As a result of this meeting a Federal-State Conference on Law Enforcement Problems of National Defense has been established in Washington. Unfortunately, the committee in charge of this conference is made up of officials whose record on civil liberties does not inspire confidence: the Governors of Rhode Island and Maryland, the Attorneys General of California and Virginia, the Speaker of the House of the Pennsylvania Legislature, the executive director of the Council of State Governments, the president of the Interstate Commission on Crime, and Chairman Sumners of the House Judiciary Committee. The last, a believer in "Anglo-Saxon supremacy," is rabidly anti-labor.

No doubt the Department of Justice intended by its August meeting to keep state action against "subversion" and "sabotage" under control. But it only succeeded in stimulating it. Although matters connected with national defense are intrusted to the federal government by the Constitution and we have ample legislation left on the statute books from the last war, four model "anti-sabotage" and "defense" bills have been drafted by the conference for submission to the state legislatures. One is entitled "A Model Sabotage Prevention Act"; another, "A Model Act to Provide for a State Guard." Both are so drawn as to invite the very abuses and dangers the Department of Justice has sought to avoid. The first would make a criminal of anyone who "intentionally . . . impairs . . . [or] interferes . . . with . . . property with reasonable grounds to believe that such act will hinder, delay, or interfere with national defense," or conspires to commit such an act, or induces another person to commit such an act, even though the act is not committed. A newspaper editor who supports a strike for a wage increase in a defense industry might well be held guilty by some state authorities of violating this act, and he could be sentenced under it to ten years in prison plus a $10,000 fine. Similarly punishable is one who "intentionally makes or causes to be made or omits to note on inspection any defect in any article with reasonable grounds to believe that such article . . . is intended to be used in connection with national defense." This also is appallingly loose, and though the model act provides that it may not be used to impair the right to collective bargaining, that provision might well prove but a pious gesture under conditions of intense war-time hysteria.

The dangers of this anti-sabotage bill are brought into sharper relief when it is coupled with the new model act for a state guard. This state guard would be empow-

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ered to catch "saboteurs" and to pursue them into other states. Members of the guard while on duty would be immune from arrest for anything except treason or felony. Imagine what could have been done in the Vultee strike with an anti-sabotage bill of this kind and a state guard of the kind one would find in California.

We have ample federal legislation to cover sabotage, and if more is needed it can be obtained. In the light of our experience in the last war it is the duty of the Attorney General to fight the enactment of such state legislation. "It has been the view of this department," Attorney General Gregory said in his 1918 report, "that every act of arbitrary and unnecessary interference with the life, habits, and occupation of the citizen would lessen efficiency, disturb order, and weaken public confidence in the American standards of justice." We commend those words as warning to Attorney General Jackson.

Help for the Joads

NOBODY knows how many thousands of migrants are roaming the highways of the nation in search of work. During the past few months the House Committee Investigating Interstate Migration has gathered a great deal of information about these destitute citizens, but the surface of the problem has barely been scratched. The tobacco belt, the mines and oil fields of the southern Appalachians, the ghost towns throughout the country—all these potential sources of further migration were, largely for lack of funds, either neglected or scantily studied by the committee, which under the able chairmanship of Representative John H. Tolan is now holding its final hearings in Washington.

In the course of its investigations the committee examined a great number of witnesses—planters, government officials, sociologists, and many victims of the changing economy of the South. While the stories of the migrants themselves were tragically uniform accounts of following the crops, of hopeless family wanderings that netted at best $300 a year, of farmers turned scab in the industrial cities of the North, the testimony of the experts was diverse and even contradictory. Some accused cotton planters of using government acreage-reduction payments to buy tractors, which were promptly used to cut down a labor force already cut down by the crop reduction itself. Where there were 30,000 tractors in use in the South in 1930, there were 100,000 in 1938. And while some of the witnesses who appeared before the Tolan committee contended that the effects of mechanization had been negligible, figures submitted by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union concerning their own membership clearly reflect the disintegration, for one reason or another, of the plantation system. In 1934, 90 per cent of the union's members were share-croppers or tenants; by 1937, 60 per cent had become day laborers; and today 75 per cent work for wages on the plantations of Missouri, Arkansas, and Mississippi. H. L. Mitchell, who has furnished us with the figures in connection with the S. T. F. U., points out that the rapid turnover in its membership is a measure of the extent to which these workers have become migrants. Although 100,000 farm workers have held membership in the union, the largest number ever enrolled at one time was 40,000.

Some of the Tolan committee's witnesses were disposed to believe that further migration will be checked by the expansion of defense industries, but the consensus was less hopeful. The migrants of today have lived for years below the subsistence level and have no industrial skills or experience. They are suited only for farm labor—and in this area the war offers no hope. Rupert Vance, the University of North Carolina sociologist, told the committee: "The Southeast has two great problem areas in the old cotton belt and the Appalachian Mountains. They are likely as a result of the war to be joined by a third problem zone—the tobacco belt. . . . The [cotton] market is vanishing before our eyes, and the price is held up only by the support of governmental operations."

The Tolan committee has hardly got its teeth into one of the major domestic problems of the United States. We would like to see its work continued and its findings more widely publicized. But even now it is apparent that certain legislative steps are long overdue. It should not be difficult for the federal government, by virtue of its contributions to state relief funds, to force modification of state laws which require one to three years' residence before holding an unemployed worker eligible for relief. Increased appropriations for the Farm Security Administration are likewise in order. This agency, which besides making loans to share-croppers has established camps for migrant workers, has so far been their only source of aid. A few camps, providing decent housing for less than 10,000 workers, is obviously no solution, but these camps might serve as models for an extensive program of low-cost housing, undertaken jointly by the government and employers of migratory labor.

Such measures are obviously superficial, however, and are offered to relieve a serious situation rather than to solve the problem. At the heart of the matter is the crying need for extending minimum-wage legislation to agricultural workers. Testifying before the committee, both Secretary of Labor Perkins and Colonel Philip B. Fleming criticized exemption of farm workers from federal labor laws and pointed out that a precedent already exists in the sugar industry, where the government makes payment of a minimum wage a prerequisite for subsidies to the owners of plantations and refineries.

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With Southern planters receiving millions of dollars annually in government subsidies, it should not be impossible to impose working conditions that would not drive Southern farm labor to the highways in desperation.

Too Normal for Comfort

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

SIX weeks have slipped by since election. The Willkie crusade is in process of becoming an impersonal organization dedicated gently to the "principles" on which the Republican campaign was fought, but nobody seems to remember just what they were. Business is going on as usual, and the President's third inauguration lies just ahead.

Somehow, everything seems a little too normal and unchanged for comfort.

Before the election we were alternately warned and promised that as soon as that crisis of national decision was past, things would happen. Swift developments in Congress or, if Congress were shuffled out of the Capitol, drastic executive acts were expected. The only thing that was not expected was that nothing would happen. And that is what has happened—nothing. Instead of action, a curious relaxation seems to have attacked the government and, indeed, the country as a whole. Certainly there has been no access of courage or vigor or decision or awareness that we are, as we keep saying we are, in a period of very desperate crisis. Is Britain's sudden burst of energy and success in the Mediterranean responsible for the apathy in America? Do we need to see the whites of catastrophe's eyes before we move?

I don't know the answer, but I am sure of the fact. This country is not behaving like a country that realizes its own hopes and interests and even its national existence are at issue. It is not acting as if it intended to defend at any cost its freedom and its institutions. It is acting, instead, as if it had ten years, or five, or two in which to prepare to defend those things. The rearmament program is way behind schedule. The draft is behind schedule. Shipments to England are behind schedule. Equally important, the progress toward democratic control of these processes is imperceptible. The interesting proposal for speeding up airplane production described by I. F. Stone on another page of this issue is an encouraging exception to the rule, but it is still only a proposal and its chance of winning the support of the industries involved, or of the Defense Commission, seems slim. In general the progress of events seems to be heading the other way. Attacks on the Walsh-Healey Act become more insistent; threats to civil liberties lurk in such legislation as we discuss editorially on page 621; the refugee question, a sure test of our democratic pretensions, has bogged down deeper than ever in conflicting jurisdictions and rulings and theories of procedure.

Can we afford this sort of stalemate? The condition of the world forbids it, unequivocally. It can be said without any hesitation that only a tremendous effort backed by confidence and determination and coordinated on a solidly democratic basis will enable our country to survive. If it cannot make this effort it will surrender, in one way or another, and become a subsidiary of Hitler's New Order holding company. And this will be the fate it deserves.

Never have we needed clear-cut leadership as we do today. The vague conflicts of objective and method which could be tolerated with mere discomfort in the first years of the Roosevelt regime have become major dangers today. We must head in one direction, not a dozen. We can no longer tolerate the contradictions that make the State Department at one and the same time the mouthpiece of an aggressive anti-fascist foreign policy and a tacit agent and ally of Hitlerism. We cannot ask labor's self-sacrificing support of the defense

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program and at the same time permit defense contracts to go to Henry Ford. We must become, if for the first time in our history, a nation with a single, consistent policy; and that policy must be both democratic and militant. Most people expected such a policy to be born out of the election campaign. But success can work either way. It can serve as a mandate, a goad to action, or it can provide a heap of laurels on which to relax. To relax today is to betray a suicidal lack of imagination. But one has to search far in official circles to find a full, harsh realization that unless we act, tensely and courageously, catastrophe is just around the corner.

Labor's Plan: 500 Planes a Day

BY I. F. STONE

Detroit, December 15

DETROIT may soon be the scene of one of the most important battles of this war, and your correspondent has just been going over the battlefield. By the time this appears in print the preliminary bombardment should have begun. The future of Britain, and of Britain as our outer fort against Nazism, depends upon planes; whether we can make the planes fast enough may depend upon the outcome of the battle to be fought here.

In this Detroit area, in this huge and sprawling conglomeration of factories for the automobile and its parts, the American people possess the greatest productive machine of its kind in the world. Labor here believes that if this productive machine were utilized to the full, it would be possible within six months to turn out 500 planes a day without seriously interfering with the production of automobiles.

By "labor" I mean first of all Walter P. Reuther, director of the General Motors division of the C. I. O. United Automobile Workers, who for the past three months has been knocking on doors and hammering on desks in Detroit and Washington with this idea of his. By "labor" I also mean the automobile workers' union of which he is an official, for President R. J. Thomas of the U. A. W. and President Philip Murray of the C. I. O. are getting behind the plan and will have announced their support of it by the time this story appears. By "labor" I also mean Sidney Hillman and his aides on the National Defense Advisory Commission, who quickly saw the tremendous possibilities in Reuther's idea and have been encouraging and guiding its development. Hillman laid the main outlines of it before Knudsen almost three months ago.

By "planes" I mean single-motored, all-metal pursuit ships, embodying the latest developments in the famous British Spitfire and powered by a liquid-cooled motor.

And by "battle" I mean battle, because this plan can only be put into effect by treating the automobile and automobile-parts industry of the Detroit area as one big factory under special administrative control, subordinating all private interests to the one job of getting out the planes. The battle cannot be won without casualties —the price of planes and the capital values the aircraft industry has built on that price. For the success of this plan would cut in half the cost of making planes, a development which the aircraft industry as a whole dreads far more than the defeat of Britain.

The job of getting out the planes requires, first of all, skilled mechanics, and the first shocking fact that inquiry uncovers here is that roughly a third of the skilled mechanics in this area are out of work and most of the rest are working less than a full forty-hour week. There are more than 15,000 skilled mechanics in Detroit and its environs—tool-and-die makers, jig and fixture makers, pattern makers and designers. Estimates of the number either totally unemployed or working on production jobs that less skilled men could fill run from 5,000 to 8,000. Fisher Body Plant No. 23, the largest tool-and-die shop in the world, has employed as many as 4,800 at one time and has machinery enough to work that number again. It employed about 1,400 men from March to November of this year, most of them on a forty-eight-hour week. It now has 400 men on its pay roll, and they are working only thirty-two hours a week. The tool-and-die shops of General Motors are on a short work week. So are Ford's. So is the Fisher-Pontiac shop. Despite newspaper talk of the shortage of skilled labor, skilled mechanics have been laid off here in the past few months or put on production jobs as ordinary workers. The same conditions probably prevail at other machine-shop centers, such as Toledo, South Bend, Cleveland, Kenosha, Milwaukee. *We need machines to make planes; yet men who can make machines are idle.* No other area in the country has so great a reservoir of this essential skilled labor as Detroit.

A second shocking fact is that while Packard is digging the ditches for the foundations of a new factory to build plane engines and Ford is going over blueprints for a new plane-engine plant, much plant capacity here is idle or not used to the full. One huge plant here is entirely idle. It has enough floor space for assembly lines to put

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together 500 plane engines a day, and the sponsors of the Reuther plan have selected it as their main assembly plant. Hardly an automotive factory in this area is working at full capacity; hardly one could not do its part in a coordinated production program. The Reuther plan would bring the idle plants and idle men together. Instead of relying on new engine and aircraft plants that cannot begin operation until the fall of 1942, labor proposes a scientifically planned program to use Detroit's unemployed skill and machinery to put out planes —and to put them out in huge quantities in six months.

But there is more to the proposal than this. It also demands the intelligent application of the simple principle that underlies modern mass production—division of labor. Packard and Ford may prefer a contract that will give them a whole new plant for engines, though this may require work on half a hundred separate parts, each with a problem of its own from a mass-production point of view. Labor proposes to parcel out the problems as well as the job so that no one plant will have to concentrate on more than one or two problems of tooling.

Labor proposes (1) a survey of the automotive industry in the Detroit area which will show, plant by plant and virtually machine by machine, what capacity is available over and above the normal and seasonal needs of the automobile industry—in other words, what type of engine or aircraft part each plant could turn out and in what quantities. It proposes (2) the breaking down of the blueprint of a Spitfire fighter into its various parts and the assignment of these parts for mass production to the plants the survey has shown can best handle the job.

Under such a system, the task of retooling would be immensely simplified. Buick might put out so many crank shafts, Dodge might be held responsible for so many cylinders, Hudson might make the valves. Each shop would have a final-inspection department to see that every part was up to specifications before it went to the assembly plant. A highly trained corps of crack assembly men from the different automobile companies would superintend assembly of the engine. Similar methods would be applied to the fuselage and wings. The wings are standard metal, and the problem of making them would be comparatively simple, particularly in Detroit, which has the largest metal-stamping presses in the world. Different body plants would be used for wing, tail, and fuselage. The body plants in this area are estimated to have an unused potential of about 40 per cent. Engines, wings, and fuselage would be put together in huge hangars to be erected at the Wayne County airport, and the complete planes could be flown out from there. Sponsors of the plan believe it would take six months of work to begin production at 20 planes a day, that they could hit 500 in a few weeks, that the inevitable "bugs" in production could be eliminated by the time the first 10,000 planes were out. The first 10,000 would be used for trainers. Five hundred planes a day would be 3,000 planes a week, 150,000 planes a year, enough to swamp the *Luftwaffe*. If only a third of that number could be achieved, it would win the war.

Many problems are involved, but none of them are insoluble, and all of them are made easier by this kind of approach. Knudsen, who knows of the plan, put forward a tentative and timid alternative of his own in a speech before the Automobile Manufacturers' Association a month ago, but his scheme was merely to make the automobile industry a reservoir of parts for aviation. The Reuther plan proposes to leave the great bombers and the more difficult types of planes to the aviation industry and to convert this area into a huge factory for the fighter plane. It proposes that the automobile industry tackle the problem of the plane—which is a flying automobile—from the mass-production angle, an angle from which the aircraft industry, with its comparatively miniature resources, has never been able to tackle it.

The Reuther plan is merely the extension on a large and well-planned scale of what the average automobile manufacturer does when he farms out his parts. This farming-out process provides the guide to the method which would be used in paying each plant for its work. But if the production problem seems fairly simple, the task of winning the cooperation of the private interests involved is a thorny one. The aircraft industry has a vested interest in keeping up the price of planes. The automobile manufacturers fear that the Reuther plan might interfere with the production of automobiles, and they fear even more that it might spoil their chance of obtaining new government-financed engine and body plants. The management people I spoke to in Detroit all insisted that aircraft could not be built in automobile plants. The skilled tool-and-die workers—Reuther is himself a tool-and-die worker—insisted that it could; and the problem of the mass production of planes is essentially a tool-and-die problem. The tool-and-die workers say that General Motors is building most of the Allison engine not in the new Allison plant but in the old Cadillac plant, with retooled Cadillac machinery. I talked to men who work in the Cadillac factory, and they confirmed these statements. Labor sees in the Reuther plan a way to end seasonal employment here by making Detroit a great aircraft center and adjusting plane to automobile production. Obviously the Reuther plan could be successfully carried out only if government and labor, the two forces interested solely in production, had equal representation with capital in the administration of the program. No doubt the cry of "collectivism" will be raised, though it is planned to pay a reasonable profit. Unfortunately, capital has not always been satisfied with a reasonable profit, even on patriotism.

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The Hitler "Revolution"

BY RAYMOND GRAM SWING

[*Although the author did not offer it as such, we submit the following article as a reply to Anne Morrow Lindbergh's thesis that Hitlerism, whether we like it or not, is the advance guard of an inevitable and revolutionary world order, its faults merely the "scum" on the "wave of the future."*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

THE most dangerous word now assailing our minds, in my opinion, is the word "inevitable." It is more dangerous than the word "fascism," than "war," than the lesser words that represent evil to our generation, like "lower standard of life," insecurity," "inflation."

The words we recognize as evil rally in us some degree of opposition, and we translate our opposition into thought and action according to our light and strength. But we have not been taught to classify "inevitable" among the evil words. Part of our light and strength lies in our sense that effort is worth expending. The mind which begins with a conviction of its own futility is like a motor empty of fuel. And that is what makes the word "inevitable" dangerous. It represents defeat before the expenditure of effort, before the acceptance of sacrifice.

I am concerned about the introduction of this word "inevitable" into a discussion of the world conflict. The war is being described as the working of inscrutable and inevitable forces so vast that the individual, either by his own contribution or through concerted action with other individuals, is unable to affect those forces. We are told that a world revolution is in progress, and we are expected to be so impressed by the magnitude of the concept that we resign ourselves to inaction. We are advised to believe that the inscrutable forces are better for us than any brave self-conducted behavior we may rally against the evils we see. We are told that what is coming is inevitable, and that it is good. Americans are being advised to consider themselves exempted from the conflict in the world on the ground that bigger forces are at work than we know or can affect, that these are so-called "good" forces, even though superficially they look "evil."

Let us examine the thesis, first to scrutinize the statement that a world revolution is in progress, next that it is bound to end well. Translated into current language, the statement means first of all that the Nazi movement is revolutionary. When this is said one is supposed to respond not only with a feeling that it is something deep, but that it also is something fundamentally liberating. For the revolutions of history have been liberating in their ultimate effect.

A political or economic revolution is one in which power passes from a smaller to a larger group, and so gives more people freedom. If the power passes from a larger to a smaller group, it is called a counter-revolution. These are elementary definitions, and they would be sufficient if social behavior always developed in an elementary way.

It is true, the coming to power of the Nazis was revolutionary to a limited extent. The Weimar Republic had not been thoroughly revolutionary, at least not enough so to clinch the transfer of power from the aristocracy and upper middle class to the broad basis of labor and peasants. The National Socialist Party was recruited largely from the lower middle classes, with a sprinkling of industrialists. Superficially it looked like a revolution when the Nazis captured the state. But the appearance was deceptive. Hitler did not rule for the benefit of his followers. They did not become suddenly more free. He exercised the power which he had seized through the lower middle class for something other than its liberation. He applied it to the construction of a military machine. He instituted the greatest short-term public-works project of all history. Obviously this solved the immediate economic problem of giving work and wages to the unemployed. But this was the measure of the economic freedom created. Even this measure of liberation was small, since a great public-works program which was not creating permanent wealth could not be of lasting economic benefit. Even without war, building a war machine is regressive in its effect, and brings a lowering of the standard of life. It does not represent expanding freedom. The net economic benefit of the Nazi revolution to individuals in the German state was the employment of the unemployed, on whose behalf, in the last analysis, those already employed had to accept a reduced standard of living. If the revolution was only economic, only to be thought of in terms of job security, employment, and a well-established standard of living, it was a fraud. And from that standpoint to argue that the Nazi revolution promises vast benefit to the world, over which it is sweeping with new concepts of liberation, is palpable nonsense. There is nothing revolutionary in the construction of a war machine. Those who attribute to the Nazi regime the aura of revolution are ignorant of the regime or of revolution, or of both. Certainly there

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is nothing good, and hence inevitable, in the Nazi economic pattern. It offers to the world no freedom which we should be wise to introduce into our own economy.

But a revolution may bring economic hardship for a time and yet promise economic liberation later on, and it is not enough to dismiss the present inadequacy of Nazi policy without a look at its potentialities. If the Nazis intended to do no more than build a military economy, and hoped to promote prosperity by building more and more war equipment, we should not need to look farther. The revolutionary promise would be a hoax for the German public. In time they would discover it and relieve themselves of the perpetrators of the hoax.

But the Nazis ask to be taken more seriously. They are not going to stop with building a military machine; they are intent on using the machine to conquer the raw materials of the world and dominate its production and markets. And though the unemployed so far have been the only ones to benefit by Nazi economics, the Nazis promise that in the future the benefits will be enormous and will be shared by all Germans. They will accomplish this, not by establishing an economic system in which the world as a whole is to prosper, but by establishing a permanent world inequality, with Germans owning or controlling the tools of production, which are to be used by non-owning workers, in other words, by a vast class which is never to come into control of its own economic destiny. This is the promise. I am not saying it is a credible promise. It has been made by men who have yet to show ability to master anything other than a war economy in a police state, and who have not even tackled the job of creating wealth in their own country. Whether they can dominate and make function a nest of nations, and keep them harmoniously producing for German benefit, is, to put it mildly, highly questionable. It presupposes something more than a police state; it presupposes a world police empire, and it is a rash assumption that men can be cowed into producing raw materials and manufactures by spies, concentration camps, and machine-guns. But that is not the aspect of the problem to examine now. The question is: Is this revolution, and if it is, is it revolution to which the world should resign itself in hopeful anticipation?

By the definition I have given of revolution, a transfer of power from a smaller to a larger number, the fulfilment of this dream of empire would be revolutionary. If all Germans were elevated to the ruling class, and if the control of all the world's tools of production and all its resources were to be vested in them, and if this nation of rulers were to dominate the remainder of the world as inferior, this would be a revolutionary extension of power to those Germans who have little or no power today. And Nazis, with their dream of world domination in mind, may be quite sincere when they speak of their National Socialism as revolutionary. It isn't a revolution yet, as their leaders all but admit, but it will be. It will liberate Germans not now liberated. They will have power, they will be more free—so the Nazis say.

But my definition of revolution contradicts the Nazis while it appears to substantiate them. A larger number of Germans would be free. But they would become so only by transferring to themselves the freedom enjoyed in the rest of the world. And in the end, if the German objective was reached, power would have passed from the many to the relatively few. And that would not be revolution; it would be counter-revolution.

So far I have spoken only of the economic aspect of the so-called Nazi revolution. But freedom is not only economic. Apologists for Germany tell us that under Hitler class distinctions have broken down. You have all heard of the well-known Nazi general who eats his dinner with his well-known chauffeur. This well-known meal is peddled about as a snapshot of democracy at work. But though this is the end of one snobbishness, it is not the end of snobbishness in Germany. Another snobbishness has been substituted for it. The general eats with the chauffeur, both being Germans. But the German will not eat with a Jew, or even trade with a Jew. There is no pretense about that. You may say that racial distinctions are drawn in the United States. But as a nation we know we are sinning against our own principles in drawing them, and in time we hope to overcome the habit and impulse to sin; whereas in Germany this same race discrimination is not a sin, of which a representative Nazi must be ashamed; it is the very keystone of Nazi policy. The Nazis do not promise ultimate brotherhood. They hate the thought of brotherhood. They are striving for ultimate mastery.

But social equality is not the only non-material right of a free society and not its most valuable one. In a free society the individual is guaranteed the protection of law administered by independent courts of justice; he is free to write and speak, free to meet, free to worship, and free to have a final control of his government. In all these respects the individual German enjoyed a wide freedom before the advent of Hitler. In all these respects he now enjoys no freedom whatever. He is not protected by an independent judiciary. He is not free to write or speak, to meet, to worship, or to control the government. Nor do the Nazi promise-makers hold out to him the hope that after an interim period these liberties will be restored. On the contrary, he is given only one pledge: his race and nation are to have power, and he is told he must be expressed only by belonging to them. Henceforth he counts only as a member of a race and nation. And it is explained to him that he cannot achieve racial and national supremacy without the permanent sacrifice of personal liberties.

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Revolution being the transfer of power from a smaller to a larger group, and power being more than the control of economic factors, one sees that most of the German people have lost some of their power. They are denied practical control of national affairs; they may not freely write, advocate, or worship, and their persons are not sacred in courts of justice. This power was theirs, but it has now passed from the many to the few. In these respects German National Socialism is counter-revolutionary.

Now to return to the word "inevitable." Part of the concept of that word derives from the sense that, whatever its immediate appearance, the so-called Nazi revolution is going to do more good than evil. By this statement is not meant that Nazism is like a fire burning the slums of modern life. Those who tell us it is for the ultimate good affirm that there is inherent revolutionary liberation in Nazi ideas. They affirm that the ideas are liberating Germans and, through Germans, will liberate all mankind. They admire the organization of the Nazi state. They delight in the efficiency of the Nazi war machine. They are fascinated by the flight of Nazi imagination in taking charge of the whole world. But to grant the skill of Nazi domination is not to say that there is any revolutionary liberation in Nazi ideas. On the contrary, this is the skill of counter-revolution, the skill of a few men controlling the many, one of the familiar skills of ancient and medieval times. The skill can operate in the modern world only if the many who have liberties resign them or are too weak to defend them. A counter-revolution cannot succeed unless the many who have the power are incompetent in holding on to it. And to say or to infer that this is inevitable is to say that it is inevitable that those who have power shall lay it down. Laying it down is an act of will. And an act of will is not inevitable. It is a choice. Moreover, it is a choice against self-interest. And if it is made by the non-German world today, it will be made either because the smooth skill of German tyrannical organization exerts an insane fascination or out of spiritual funk. If Germany, built as it is today on the suppressed liberties of German individuals and the slavery of the lands already conquered, is stronger or can make itself stronger than the people of the world who have freedom and whom it intends to dominate, then the free people have lost the sense of their strength and of the value of their heritage of liberties. And to imply that the Nazi revolution is inevitable is to imply that all men, save only the members of the German National Socialist Party, or men of their ilk, have lost their zeal and their enterprise.

I should make this clear: I am not arguing that this war is not or may not be a phase of a world revolution. In the existing democracies, though we have the civil liberties, we have by no means kept the economic power diffused. Democratic potentialities remain unrealized, socially, politically, and economically.

In modern war the civilians are the soldiers, and their spirit and sacrifices are essential to victory. So after the war the people may insist on sharing the power they do not now wield. That, I should say, is most likely. But if that is revolution, it is not going to be Nazi counter-revolution. Anyone who knows the masses of Britain knows they are not waiting to set up a Nazi regime, with concentration camps, suppressed civil liberties, a foreign policy of conquest, and the invention of a new slavery under a dominant race. Certainly in this country, which also will be deeply affected by the war in its time, the people have no such longings. What we want in America is more, not less, freedom. The common man wants more, not less, power.

But revolutions can and should come without violence if by revolution is meant a transfer of power from a smaller to a larger number. To say that the present war is a phase of a world revolution is not to say that we are doomed to have civil war and putsches wherever there have been maldistributions of political and economic power. It is to say only that we may be living in a time of the quickening of vast forces which will proceed with the long labor of liberation.

It is true that profound economic changes are in progress. The economic structure of modern society is of an intricacy that would befuddle an Alexander Hamilton or a Thomas Jefferson. We talk about our individualist society as though it were intact as in Jefferson's day, and only vaguely apprehend that part of our economic structure is in control of an oligarchy. Fundamentally it differs from the Nazi oligarchy in vital ways: it did not seize its power by trickery and violence, and it is subject to having its power whittled down by free legislative action. Still, it is an oligarchy. Much has been left undone in our democracy. But if this were not true, democracy would not be worth having. There can be no worse government than a final government.

If this is a revolutionary epoch, let us be warned lest we be defrauded by those who offer us counter-revolution as being the revolution. If there are Americans with undue political and economic power today who fear to lose it by revolution, they may try to offer us counter-revolution instead, not for our sakes but for theirs. For in counter-revolution, though they may have to sacrifice some of their elbow-room, they still can remain in the master class. If any man or woman offers us the Nazi revolution as inevitable and for the ultimate good, we should inquire if he is instinctively trying to hold on to undue power, or if he aspires to wield undue power, or if he suffers, as I said before, just from funk. Pure democracy, the final goal of all revolution, is a society in which power is diffused, not wielded by a few. And

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when these salespeople of concentrated power, these oligarchs, call the coming of the Nazi revolution inevitable, they are wishing it to come. They are making their choice. They want their own freedom, not the freedom of the many. When they advise us to do business with Hitler, to learn to get along with him, we should ask if they are clinging to an undemocratic power or yearning for an undemocratic share of it. True, Hitler is a man one can learn to get along with. One can submit. True, Hitler will not attack this country, not if we accept his new world order. True, Hitler has been a man of peace. He never fought for anything unless it was denied him.

But it is not true that we can secure our freedom by getting along with Hitler, and then, as is naively suggested, by improving democracy within our boundaries. If an eighty-ton tank is bearing down on one's house, one doesn't defend it by hanging better curtains in the living-room window or by giving the domestic help a box-spring bed. One defends it with anti-tank guns. I grant you the democratic mansion needs better curtains, and it is a scandal that the domestic help hasn't had a decent bed. But imperfect though it is, the mansion is worth defending. It is the best mansion, by and large, that the human family has yet had to occupy. And it is far more comfortable, inside and out, than a Nazi tank.

Those who try to sell us the Nazi counter-revolution as a revolution have made their choice. They are bidding to share Hitler's power. And when they imply it is the inevitable good, they are trying to sap men's minds with the worst of social potions, inaction. There is one completely effective answer to them: that the rest of us choose freedom, not only the freedom which we now enjoy even if we have not used it too wisely, but the freedom to grow more wise and more free.

A Talk with Philip Murray

BY ROSE M. STEIN

Washington, D. C., December 10

THE C. I. O.'s new generalissimo, Philip Murray, is something of an enigma to the public. Although he has been a vital force in the American labor movement for almost forty years he has always been content to play a secondary role; in his own words, he has "plugged along the mill gates" close to the people he has worked with all his life. As second in command of both the powerful United Mine Workers and the C. I. O., he has kept clear of politics and never sought popular acclaim, being always more than willing to remain behind the scenes and let the applause and flashlights concentrate on his chief. Now that he has been thrust into top place, a good deal of speculation has arisen among varied groups as to what he will or will not do. Complicating the situation is the fact that the retiring head remains not too far in the background and is known to be of a temperament which does not relish a secondary position.

Philip Murray can resolve this speculation in one of two ways: he can announce his intentions through the country's headlines, or he can proceed quietly on a chosen course of action and let the results reveal to the nation where he stands. Without a shadow of a doubt he will do the latter. He is not the kind of leader who, in a manner designed to capture popular fancy, addresses himself to the public at large regardless of the consequences to the group he represents. His primary concern is to further the well-being of his group, and all his utterances and actions are directed to that end. He is a responsible rather than a "popular" leader. To the specific questions, therefore, whether Philip Murray will "clean house," fire this man and replace him with that, reorganize this local or that council, the answer is that as a responsible labor leader he is not interested in making spectacular announcements even though the front pages are eager to quote him, or in providing a forum for dissidents, or in spending time on minor tasks when major ones are pressing. It is on major issues that Philip Murray will concentrate his attention.

Philip Murray

Seated behind a massive mahogany desk in his spacious office in the United Mine Workers' Building in Washington, he sketched for me in broad outline his organization's projected "program of action." Despite phenomenal organizational gains in the past few years and many legislative and judicial victories, labor is confronted today with problems so grave and so far-reaching that the welfare of the whole nation depends upon their successful solution. Trade unionism was a comparatively simple matter when it could confine itself to the task of bargaining and fighting for higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions. Now, in a period of advancing technology, centralized control, and huge gov-

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ernment spending for armaments, this type of unionism is outmoded. The complexities of the present situation confront all branches of labor, organized and unorganized, but the greatest burden rests upon the C. I. O., for the C. I. O. represents the workers in the major mass-production and national-defense industries—steel, coal, automobiles, aviation, shipbuilding, to mention only a few.

Philip Murray considers his new job in line with what he has been doing all his life, "only more so." At the age of ten he went into a mine in Scotland as his father's helper and forthwith joined the miners' union. (The son of a miner, under eighteen years of age, could join without initiation fee and pay half dues.) Six years later he came to the United States, promptly entered an American mine, and as promptly joined the United Mine Workers. Since then he has held many offices, from committeeman and checkweighman to C. I. O. vice-president and head of the steel organization drive. Each one demanded responsibility, devotion, and resourcefulness. His present position, he finds, merely "broadens the scope."

Within this broadened scope are four major fields of activity, all closely related. The C. I. O. must pursue aggressively its task of organizing the unorganized. It must consolidate the gains already made. It must clarify and uphold labor's proper role in the defense program. In cooperation with other groups it must shape policies designed to safeguard democracy and to avoid economic catastrophe after the defense program comes to a close. An intensified organizing campaign is already under way, with efforts centered in the strongholds of Bethlehem, Republic, and Ford. An office has even been opened in Weirton, where none could be rented for the past two years. Employees of these plants have been hired as organizers, and Philip Murray places more confidence in their drive to organize their fellow-employees than in the many rumors that Grace, Ford, Girdler, and Weir may yield to exhortation and voluntarily embrace unionism.

More difficult than this direct organization effort is the task of forestalling reaction seeking under the pretext of national emergency to rob labor of its fundamental rights, which would mean "tearing down the first line of defense." Asked how he proposed to combat this trend, Philip Murray smiled and leisurely lit another cigarette. "Oh, by the usual methods, I suppose. There is no all-embracing formula. One thing I can assure you —I'll not make a fool of myself. We will not confine ourselves to criticism alone but will be prepared to offer constructive proposals for every phase of the program that we criticize, and will base both our complaints and our proposals on facts." The C. I. O., he said, has undertaken extensive surveys of present and potential production in order to obtain the necessary data concerning basic defense industries. He proceeded to elaborate.

The all-important task before the country today is to make intelligent use of our resources and to safeguard democracy. That ties up, of course, with the defense program and with what is happening on the other side. "Narrow-minded, selfish, reactionary interests" brought France to its present state. The same interests are responsible in large part for Britain's plight. And exactly the same forces are operating here. "The country must be saved from them." To illustrate, he went on, there is a drive to outlaw strikes. "Labor will never stand for it. Such a concession would be tantamount to committing suicide." If such legislation should pass, "it would give rise to the biggest wave of strikes this country has ever seen." This, he added, does not mean that the C. I. O. favors strikes in the present emergency; "but we believe that we are better able than the Coxes and the Hoffmans to recommend ways and means for controlling the situation."

Concretely, his plan is to set up in every major defense industry joint boards on which labor, industry, consumers, and the government would be represented, with boards of review over them to serve as "clearing houses," and with a "final" board which would include the President of the United States. Had such boards been in existence, he firmly believes, the much-publicized Vultee and Aluminum strikes might have been averted. Such boards, too, would act to correct the present "scandalous" awarding of government contracts to large producers to the exclusion of smaller firms—a policy which, if it is continued, will leave industry in the hands of the great monopolies. Bethlehem Steel Corporation, for instance, controls 13 per cent of the country's steel capacity. To date it has received 40 per cent of the government's steel orders. United States Steel and other top-ranking producers have likewise received more than their proportionate share of government orders, while a number of smaller companies have received "not a dollar's worth of government business," and their employees work only two and three days a week. It may be true that these smaller concerns, "most of which, by the way, maintain excellent labor relations," are in poorer competitive position. But, Murray asks, would it not be to the ultimate benefit of our economy if the government subsidized improvements in these plants instead of loading the big corporations with so many orders that they may have to build additional capacity, thus concentrating a basic industry in fewer and fewer hands? And what is true of steel, is true of a number of other industries, including aviation. This is one of the problems with which the C. I. O. expects to concern itself.

Another is the burning question of wages. Workers in most of the defense industries are determined to demand wage increases. They do not wish to add to the government's burden of defense expenditures or to set the "go" signal for price inflation, but they are going to demand a share in the huge profits which industry is piling up.

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The high capacity at which all defense industries are operating has enormously increased both the per unit and the total profit. It is not only morally justifiable but to the best interest of the national economy that some of these profits be diverted to wages and consumption.

The C. I. O. will continue to press its demands for a joint conference of all interested groups "to probe and explore" possibilities for making our economy function more effectively. "I may be accused," said Murray, "of being a crank on this matter, but I am willing to take the risk. I consider such a conference of paramount importance." He has no illusions that by calling a meeting he can solve the country's difficulties. What he proposes is more than just a meeting. He envisions a permanent endeavor to cope with pressing national problems. To deny the possible fruitfulness of such an endeavor is to deny democracy's capacity to survive, for upon our ability to solve our problems in this peaceful and intelligent manner rests the ultimate fate of our democratic institutions. If the conference is being sidetracked because industry or some other group is unwilling to cooperate, then it is time the country knew about it.

Murray does not believe that we can attempt to solve our problems without regard to what is happening in the rest of the world. He is by no means an isolationist. He believes that the psychological effect of a British defeat upon our people "would be tragic beyond words." Moreover, the present war, Murray believes, is being supported and fought by British workers, and American labor feels a strong kinship with them. He is in favor of aiding Britain with materials but does not want "a single American boy to be sent across the water." This is the view, he believes, of labor's rank and file.

He is convinced that labor was the deciding factor in the reelection of President Roosevelt. The workers in the main approved of the President's policies and had confidence in his pledges. As the responsible head of a large segment of labor Philip Murray is mapping his "program of action" to help the President justify labor's confidence.

Russia Revisited

BY JOACHIM JOESTEN

S.S. Ginyo Maru, en route to San Francisco, November 29

NO MORE than two years ago it was a good guess that Hitler's war would make hash of Soviet Russia. Instead, the war has not only enlarged Stalin's empire and proved a real boon to it in many ways, but has also converted it into the last thing one would ever have expected it to become—a "transit country."

Persons who wish to go from Europe to America nowadays have to make a tiresome trip around three-quarters of the globe; and they have to go through Russia. Unless they prefer to wait their turn for months at Petsamo or Lisbon, the last two ports of the Continent from which a few ships still ply across the ocean, they have no choice but to go to Moscow, by plane, train, or boat, spend nine days and nights on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, wait a week or so at Vladivostok for the boat to Japan, which only runs three times a month, and then take a transpacific liner at Kobe or Yokohama—if it is a Japanese ship, the trip may very possibly be canceled at the last minute "by order of the government." It is, although not a very comfortable journey, an interesting one if you have plenty of time; if you have not, it is a damned nuisance.

I had lived in Moscow for six months in 1932 when things generally were in rather bad shape; so naturally I was curious to see how they would be now, eight years later. To tell the truth, I was disappointed. There is no denying that some progress has been made: the standard of living has undoubtedly risen; scores of new and imposing buildings have been built in Moscow alone; many services which at that earlier period were in a chaotic condition have been licked into shape. But, by and large, things looked pretty much as they did eight years ago. There were still the same depressing queues outside the food shops, the restaurants, the stores where anything of practical value could be bought, and on the station platforms. The queues, it is true, did not seem to be quite so long and the people did not look quite so hungry as in 1932, but it was obvious that the output and distribution of foodstuffs and other essentials was still—or again?—far short of requirements.

The capital seemed better off in many ways than Vladivostok, where we stayed a week, and the other towns of Siberia and the Far East, which we merely glimpsed from our train. We saw few beggars or ragged children in Moscow, but dozens of them lined the platform of practically every station beyond the Urals. They looked unspeakably tattered and grimy, and they fought like hungry wolves for the pieces of bread and the coins which the passengers threw to them.

I had read articles—which I believed innocent of propaganda—saying that the chronic dearth of food

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and household goods had at last been overcome in Soviet Russia and that the stores were filled with goods of all sorts, at reasonable prices. I cannot say whether that was true at one time, but it certainly is not true now. Indeed, most of the stores, in Moscow as in Vladivostok, were as empty and desolate as they had been eight years ago. My eyes met the same familiar and depressing sights: the yawning emptiness of cases and shelves, with here and there a sprinkling of unsalable goods, the bored-looking shop-assistants, haughtily cutting short all inquiries for articles with the unvarying, final *njet*, "none"—the most-used word of the Russian vocabulary—and the multitudes billowing to and fro, from opening hour to closing time, between the bare counters and empty cases, with eager, searching eyes, ready to jump at any object not entirely devoid of usefulness that could be bought for rubles.

We found scarcely any more goods on sale now than in 1932, but there was a spectacular change in window-dressing. Whereas in that year even the shop windows used to gape in utter desolation, they are at present alluring pitfalls for the artless passer-by. Here, behind the glass—mostly broken in Vladivostok, where it has never been replaced since the shattering days of the revolution—are exhibited all the things that the crowd in the street is longing to buy: beautiful loaves of bread and appetizing strings of sausages, ham and cheese, lusty lobsters and huge codfish, a lovely portrait of a young lady inhaling a perfume which the cosmetic trust promises to sell you if you will step inside. The promise is vain: the bread, the ham, the lobster are painted images; none of them are really on sale.

But everywhere one can buy portraits and busts of Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, and other prominent Soviet leaders. Rows upon rows of them stand in the shops—in black, in white, in colors; carved in wood, moulded in metal, or hewn in stone; tiny figures to be carried in your pocket or to be worn as amulets; medium-sized ones for office desks and sideboards; oversized specimens for the decoration of assembly halls and railroad stations. From one end of our trans-Siberian journey to the other there wasn't a station that did not flaunt at least two or three large busts of Lenin, Stalin, and sometimes Karl Marx.

Many other things were indicative of the noisome leader-worship that contributes to the resemblance between the Soviet Union and the Nazi or Fascist dictatorship. Propaganda, however, seemed to have abated somewhat. We saw nothing like the orgy of posters and banners, with hammered catchwords and flaming slogans, that until a few years ago were a part of daily life in the Soviet Union.

Are there no bright spots in the picture, then? Certainly there are. In the first place, I noticed that the majority of the people were much better dressed, and in particular better shod, than when I was last there. My wife, of course, thought their clothes were awful, but she had never been in Russia before and her mind was still filled with images of Sweden's opulence and luxuries. She found it hard to believe that a nation existed without silk stockings or pretty hats, but when she looked around for a well-dressed woman she found all and sundry wearing shabby, ill-fitting clothes of poor quality and poorer style. Well, they didn't look fashionable to me either, but they were truly well clad compared with 1932, especially the men. People in rags no longer dominate the Moscow streets as they used to. The typical Russian garments have given place to Western suits and overcoats, and real leather shoes are worn now instead of the galoshes, sandals, or mere foot-straps of former times.

Also, much better food is served in the restaurants. I had no time or opportunity on this trip through Russia to find out whether the ordinary Russian family eats better at present than eight years ago; to take the ill-provisioned food stores as evidence that it does not would be misleading because of the peculiarities of the Soviet system of distribution. But travelers and other people who can afford to eat at the Metropol or the Savoy are certainly presented with a better bill of fare. We had some delicious dishes, prepared with good butter—a thing not to be dreamed of in 1932—and plenty of bread and meat.

But what prices we paid! A four-course dinner with wine for two persons, at the Metropol, cost me 96 rubles (the official exchange rate is 5.60 rubles to the dollar); a box of sweets cost 16 rubles, a one hour's taxi ride around town 30 rubles, and so forth. Fortunately, I had a small savings deposit in rubles left over from my previous stay in the country; it came in very handy, for otherwise we should have spent our last dollar before we got on the boat at Vladivostok. In general, prices appeared to be quite as high as eight years ago and for some commodities even higher. Ever since the liquidation a few years ago of the special stores, like "Insnab," where foreign specialists and workers could buy goods upon presentation of a special booklet, and "Torgsin," where anyone could buy at reasonable prices if he had foreign currency, foreign residents and visitors in Russia have been at a distinct disadvantage owing to the unfavorable exchange rate.

However, most of the travelers on our train solved the problem in a simple manner. They sold a few of their belongings at a commissioner's shop, or better still on the "black" market, where they fetched exorbitant prices. An old suit, for example, could be sold for 300 rubles, a new one for from 800 to 1,000, a watch for 600 rubles, a pair of shoes for 300, stockings for from 40 to 100 rubles a pair. Such trading is of course illicit and subject to heavy penalties, but it goes on everywhere. If it were rigorously stopped, most of the people that

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now travel through Russia—the bulk of them are refugees from Germany and Poland—could no longer afford the journey.

There are other noteworthy improvements. Urban traffic, for example, has made considerable progress. The streets of Moscow today are enlivened by a variety of excellent automobiles, of domestic as well as of German or American make, including many new taxicabs. Tram and bus services, although still congested at rush hours, are far better able to cope with the huge traffic of the city, thanks chiefly to the new Moscow Underground, which is, technically as well as decoratively, a marvel of modern architecture.

On the whole, however, traveling in Soviet Russia is still as haphazard and comfortless a business as it used to be. A journey on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, in particular, is a source of more annoyance than pleasure. Trains are few and therefore permanently overcrowded; through trains from Moscow to Vladivostok run but twice a week. Usually it matters little whether you have booked first-, second-, or third-class tickets or hotel accommodations. As likely as not you will learn, on arrival, that the Intourist Agency in the country from which you came has issued tickets and coupons to you which the head office in Moscow or the Vladivostok branch is unable to honor. I knew an elderly and rather squeamish gentleman who, after booking, in Stockholm, a first-class passage on the boat from Vladivostok to Tsuruga, Japan, was assigned a third-class berth with twenty or more fellow-passengers in the room; nor did he get any money back, except rubles, which were obviously worthless to him since he was about to leave Russia and no one is permitted to take rubles out of the country. I also knew a woman who had bought coupons for first-class hotel accommodations in the Soviet Union, but found when she got to Vladivostok that the only hotel in the city was so full that it had not even a bench or a bathtub left to offer her as a sleeping place; she was simply told to go and sleep in an unprepared and even unlighted railroad car.

I believe that much of the disorganization and incompetence which make such a shocking impression on the foreign visitor in the Soviet Union is attributable to ingrained defects of the Russian character rather than to inevitable shortcomings of the Soviet system. But I am at a loss to understand why the Soviet authorities are so negligent in a matter which vitally affects their prestige. Surely, with a little good-will, a real effort at organization, and at least an attempt to understand the needs and wishes of the ordinary European or American traveler, it should be possible to overcome at least some of the grossest deficiencies. There is a peculiar sort of grandeur in the way the Russians ignore foreign opinion, determined, it seems, to muddle on as they please in their age-old ways.

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Steel Famine Ahead?

ALL modern industry moves on a pivot of steel, and steel is *par excellence* the raw material of defense. Our present program calls for huge quantities of steel for warships and planes, artillery and small arms, for shells, tanks, and army trucks. And in order to produce these things, still more steel is required for the manufacture of machine tools, for the building of new factories, and for the additional railroad equipment which heavier traffic will make necessary. At the same time Britain, facing an enemy controlling much more than twice its steel-making capacity, is buying increased quantities from us, and we must also fill the needs of Latin America, for which we are now the sole source of supply.

Finally, apart from the direct demands for steel arising from the defense program, there is likely to be an indirect demand of increasing magnitude. Millions of men are going back to work; millions of others are working longer hours and drawing higher wages. Soon this accretion of spending power will be showing itself in rising sales of automobiles, refrigerators, and other articles made partly of steel. The smooth functioning of our economic machine and the satisfaction of both military and civilian demands for goods depend in large measure on an adequate supply of steel.

Since steel-making plant cannot be constructed overnight, it is essential to look ahead and consider how much plant will be required one and two years hence. At the present time the maximum possible annual output of ingots is between 82 and 83 million tons, and for some months the industry has been operating very close to capacity. A further slight increase in the rate of output is possible, but allowance must be made for furnaces needing repair. We must remember, too, that the defense program is in its early stages and that still larger appropriations for the army and navy are anticipated next year. Moreover, there is reason to believe that British demands have not yet reached their peak. Plans now under discussion for the construction of 360 freighters in this country would alone call for over a million tons of steel. In spite of these factors, leaders of the steel industry as a whole are far more bothered about the prospect of being saddled with excess capacity when the emergency ends than they are about a possible shortage in the near future. Devoted as most of them were to Mr. Willkie, they seem to have been singularly unimpressed by his campaign lectures on the vital necessity of increased production and his strictures on defeatism. Currently their chief preoccupation is with the depression which they regard as the inevitable outcome of the defense boom. They cannot visualize American economy functioning at near-capacity except under the stimulus of war, and hence their most pressing concern is to make their industry as shock-proof as they can.

It is not surprising, then, that steel magnates tend to minimize the expansive effects of the defense program, taking the attitude that the industry is fully equipped to meet all demands upon it. Addressing the National Association of

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Manufacturers on December 11, Charles R. Hook, president of the American Rolling Mill Company, declared that in 1942, the peak year, domestic defense requirements of steel would not exceed 6,000,000 tons. He estimated aggregate demand from the British Empire in the same year at 10,000,000 tons and other exports at 2,500,000 tons. This would leave 64,000,000 tons available for normal civilian requirements against a total consumption of 60,000,000 tons in the boom year of 1929.

A very different picture is presented by the National Resources Planning Board in a tentative report recently made public for criticism and suggestions. Correlating steel consumption with national income, the board estimates that if the latter reaches $83 billion the iron and steel industry would have to invest at least $316,000,000 in additional plant in order to meet all demands. This would cover an increase in ingot capacity of 15.4 million tons and additions to blast-furnace and rolling-mill output of 6.9 and 2.6 million tons respectively. With national income rising to $89 billion, an expansion in ingot requirements of 28.4 million tons is indicated, while at the $94-billion level the board estimates additional demand at 39.6 million tons, or nearly 50 per cent more than present capacity. National income may easily rise even beyond the highest point mentioned in this report during the next few years. Dr. Harold Moulton of the Brookings Institution has suggested that $80 billion may be achieved in 1941; Dr. Louis H. Bean, economic counselor to the Department of Agriculture, has estimated the 1942 total at $90 billion; John W. Hanes, Willkie Democrat and former Under Secretary of the Treasury, says we have every right to expect a national income of $100 billion.

The extreme divergence of opinion between Mr. Hook, as a representative steel man, and the National Resources Planning Board is a matter that should be cleared up without delay, for even if the latter has overestimated future demand for steel by as much as 50 per cent, a shortage will begin to appear in the fall of 1941 unless new plant orders are put in hand at once. William L. Batt, a leading industrialist and deputy to Edward Stettinius on the Defense Advisory Commission, said recently: "I am convinced that the steel industry must enlarge its capacity, and I see indications that the industry realizes it too." The only concrete signs of expansion, however, are the construction programs undertaken by United States Steel and Bethlehem. These call for an outlay of $38,000,000 and provide for an addition to national ingot capacity of 1,290,000 tons, or about 1½ per cent. This seems pretty small potatoes in comparison with the lowest estimate of needs published by the National Resources Planning Board.

If, despite the steel industry's optimism, a shortage does reveal itself next year, it will become necessary either to permit prices to rise so as to discourage civilian consumption or to adopt a priorities system and ration the non-defense industries. In either case the result will be a severe blow to economic progress. We cannot achieve maximum national production or maximum national income if we allow a bottleneck to develop in the heart of our industrial system.

[On December 7 this column mentioned R. N. Janeway economist to the Chrysler Corporation, as the author of a program for expanding railroad equipment. It should have been made clear that Mr. Janeway's study was made on behalf of the National Resources Planning Board and not in his capacity as consultant to the Chrysler Corporation.]

In the Wind

THE FIRST CONCRETE result of Philip Murray's replacement of John L. Lewis will be a shake-up at C. I. O. headquarters. Lee Pressman and Len De Caux are definitely slated to leave. Other changes will also be made, but with as little fanfare as possible.

WASHINGTON HEARS that Joe Kennedy is preparing to write at length about most of the ideas he denied having expressed to a Boston newspaperman. The Administration isn't too happy about the episode.

THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE issues a magazine called *Clarity*. In a recent issue the organization was referred to as the "Young Commercial League." Nobody noticed it until the printing and distribution of the magazine were complete.

GUESTS AT THE A. F. of L. dinner held recently in New York City wondered how Joseph Fay, who was expected to sit on the dais, and David Dubinsky would get along after their New Orleans fist fight. Both stayed away from the affair.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S "For Whom the Bell Tolls" has started a mild war in Communist circles. Although both the *Daily Worker* and *New Masses* denounced it fiercely, it is sold at the Communist Workers' Bookshop. The party's line with respect to it, insiders say, is still being debated.

AN UNREPORTED "INCIDENT" occurred at the last dinner of the Junior Bar Association. Samuel Seabury, one of the speakers, was asked to read a letter from President Roosevelt to the gathering. Mr. Seabury flatly refused, and the association's president read it. Supreme Court Justice Douglas, who spoke later, discreetly rapped Mr. Seabury's knuckles.

IT IS DEFINITELY settled, Washington sources say, that Tommy Corcoran will be Assistant Secretary of War when Robert Patterson assumes the newly created post of Under Secretary.

THE WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE COMMITTEE is planning vigorous (private) pressure to get the British to release Nehru, the Indian leader. The committee thinks the move would arouse widespread sympathy here.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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A Native at Large

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

GRETNA, Virginia, is an inconsiderable community on that U. S. Route 29 which runs through the heart of the country of textile mills from Virginia through the Carolinas to Georgia. North of it is the little town of Alta Vista, which makes rayons and cedar chests. Not far below it is Chatham, where well-to-do girls, many of them from the North, learn the lessons and ride the horses of the Episcopal Church's excellent and fashionable Chatham Hall. Little Virginia boys march there in the uniform of the Hargrave Military Academy. In the same section lived long ago Colonel Charles Lynch, who, according to Virginia tradition, gave his name to Lynch law. Now that region is the scene of a murder case in which a Negro killed a white man, a case which the Workers' Defense League would make significant in the justice of the South. Strangely, I think, it crowds the dead man and the Negro and the South all together as victims.

Odell Waller, the young Negro waiting for his execution in Virginia, went to the house of Oscar Davis in Gretna to force a sharing of their wheat crop—and he went armed. Carrying a gun in the fear of danger may be, as the Workers' Defense League says, legal in Virginia. But guns kill in Virginia as elsewhere. When the white man in anger reached for his pocket as for a gun, Waller shot him. That is the story of Waller and his mother. Apparently, however, the white man had no gun. There were two bullet wounds in his back, even if he died, as is said, of a collapsed lung after an operation and not of the bullet wounds for which the operation was performed.

Most Virginians have not even heard of the case. Even such a liberal friend of the Negro and foe of the poll tax as Virginius Dabney, editor of the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, regards the case as merely a murder, not involving injustice to the convicted Negro. On the other hand, undoubtedly sincere, it seems to me, is the feeling of the defenders of Waller, most of them outside Virginia, who feel that the case involves all the fear and injustice under which the Negro lives in black agricultural counties—the question of the poll tax in Virginia, which in this case, they say, was a prerequisite to jury service, the injustices of the AAA crop-control system, the callousness of the white courts.

All those things may be involved. But the thing which impressed me most about the case has not been stressed in the publicity. Waller's condition as a share-cropper has been emphasized. The word stands out in the case like a phrase on a banner—"share-cropper sentenced to die," "doomed Virginia share-cropper." But practically nothing has been said about the fact that the white man whom he killed was a tenant, too. Below the true landowner, Davis, the white tenant, let Waller, the Negro, have a little land on shares; the murder came from their quarreling about it.

It does not seem to me strange to suppose that the white man was trying to cheat the Negro. It does not seem to me difficult to believe that the young Negro went to demand his rights more in terror than murderousness. My observation is that more scared men kill than brutal ones. I can understand the contention that poor little Waller was the product—as Bigger Thomas was—of a whole system of racial suppression, of racial fear. But still the case seems to me to prove, if it proves anything except a private murder, that both the white tenant and the Negro were caught at the bottom of an American agriculture in the South which gives so little that fighting over it—maybe even murder over it—is not to be taken as an unexpected result.

That's the crime, and what are we going to do about it? Save little Odell, who is supposed to die on the twenty-seventh of December unless $2,000 is raised to perfect his appeal before that time? Raising the money would be fine for Odell, but I don't think it would get to the heart of the tragedy. And I am not sure by any means that Odell is the most misused man in prison who killed before he went there. We can't dig Davis up and make him a better neighbor, or one more forehanded with his own gun.

It will cost more than any $2,000 to make justice here. Here is the violence of deep Southern poverty, white and black. It does not always end in an individual murder case in Gretna. Through millions of individual cases it has made slums in Chicago and New York. It sent the Joads across the desert to meet the vigilantes.

Any group which wishes to make young Waller a symbol may express honest indignation about him, perhaps even secure some worth-while results by doing so. But Oscar Davis was a symbol, too. He was no rich landlord. He was a white tenant. And the anger, the rapaciousness, the fear, the murder between white men and Negroes in the South need symbolizing as the conflict of men over the sharing of too little for all. It will take more than $2,000 and indignation to cure that.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

The Whisper of the Devil

THE PILGRIM HAWK: A LOVE STORY. By Glenway Wescott. Harper and Brothers. $1.50.

"THE PILGRIM HAWK," with which Glenway Wescott returns to fiction after a twelve-year absence, is less a story of love than a fable, and it illustrates again, but more steadily and with greater critical weight, his natural inclination toward symbolic and legendary values in narrative. Where once he elaborated the mythic qualities of the pastoral or folk tale, the tribal ritual of the family photograph album, or the local daemon that haunts the country hearsay, superstition, crimes, defeats, and personal legends of his Midwestern homeland, he here reverts to a time and place grown more fabulous than Wisconsin ever could: to post-war France of the expatriates, a fool's paradise now removed to a lunar distance by change and war, its delusions of privilege and emancipation lingering in the memory with the preposterous unreality of life on another planet. He tells of the rich Irish Cullens, whose love, fixed by psychic necessity, is sped to its crisis by Mrs. Cullen's pet falcon, which figures both the husband's enslavement and tormented jealousy and the wife's mastery of her lover. The relations of these three condense the compulsions of love, its warfare, and the long debt it imposes on life, and the drama of marital conflict is given depth by two contrasting images: the animal passion of two French servants and the enervating Platonic sophistication of Alexandra Henry, a rich American in whose house near Paris the story takes place one summer afternoon twelve years ago, and the Mr. Tower who observes the crisis and struggles to grasp and annotate its import.

The art of fable, with its cognates in primitive myth and in the moral or critical allegory of modern times, has become a prepossession of contemporary writers—a means of resisting the pedantry of facts, a corrective of the laming servility of realism, a plea for poetic values in fiction, an inevitable medium of the imagination at a moment when psychic or moral necessities protest the determinism of science and seek fresh contact with the region of essence, where spirit lurks elusive and enigmatic but with the strength of its primary impulses. It has always been an art of great appeal to Americans; the enthusiasm of Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, Crane, and James has reappeared, enriched by the complex devices and psychic motives used by Mann, Gide, Conrad, Lawrence, Yeats, and Kafka, in writers as different as Miss Porter, Miss Boyle, Faulkner, and Hemingway. The radical problem of the art exists in its necessary qualities of ambiguity and allegorical tension: in the degree to which the symbolic motive must remain involuntary to the experience or rooted in the matter of the genre, and in the degree to which that motive may derive from the conscious idea or moral design of the author. The balance of these factors is bound to remain acute and imperative to the authority of any fable. Without it the form either lapses into the static or conventional condition of parable, or becomes forced by the exertions of originality or ulterior intellectual ambition into a stultifying pedantry. To strike the necessary subtlety of balance and analogy requires a supreme instinct for evocation and reference; it needs also the firmest possible integration of idea with dramatic substance and the unobtrusive control of a strong poetic insight. When it has these the fable escapes the excessive didactic calculation of tales like "St. Mawr," "The Gentleman from San Francisco," and most of the works of Gide and takes on the exact authority we get in "Mario and the Magician" and Kafka's "Burrow" or, in more elaborate dramatic terms, in stories as different as "The Turn of the Screw" and "Flowering Judas."

Of Mr. Wescott's story, for all its sensitive insights, deft shaping, and hypnotic suggestive force, it must be said that the balance is never clearly defined or resolved. The dramatic substance of his scenes and characters does not manage to sustain the elaborate commentary he has imposed on it. The annotation becomes too elaborate, strained, ingenious, and self-conscious. A tendency toward a worrying preciosity of inference and analysis is never genuinely subdued to the natural volition of events and personalities, and the result becomes something too patently contrived and at times almost desperately *voulu*. This is not to minimize the beauty of many of its pages, the great superiority of its style and feeling to the general ruck of fiction, and its always subtly considered, often brilliant observations. The hieratic mystery of the bird, with its suggestions of the fatality of love, of ruthless energy in nature, and of the secret ordeal of art, manages to surmount the elaborate rites of falconry that have been studied and imposed on the tale. At times Mr. Wescott condenses his observation into judgments that express his story's motive with admirable point and ease:

> Unrequited passion; romance put asunder by circumstances or mistakes; sexuality pretending to be love—all that is a matter of little consequence, a mere voluntary temporary uneasiness compared with the long course of true love, especially marriage. In marriage, insult arises again and again and again; and pain has to be not only endured, but consented to; and the amount of forgiveness that it necessitates is incredible and exhausting. When love has given satisfaction, then you discover how large a part of the rest of life is only payment for it. . . . To see the cost of love before one has felt what it is worth, is a pity; one may never have the courage to begin.

He can be reminded how "all pets, all domesticated animals, no matter how ancient or beautiful or strange, show a comic aspect sooner or later; a part of the shame of our humanity that we gradually convey to them," and again of "the absurd position of the artist in the midst of the disorders of those who honor and support him, but who can scarcely be expected to keep quiet around him for art's sake." He can define his personal difficulties and yet overshoot the mark of creative humility: "Again and again I give way to a kind of inexact and vengeful lyricism; I cannot tell what right I have to be avenged, and I am ashamed of it. Sometimes I entirely doubt my judgment in moral matters; and

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so long as I propose to be a story-teller, that is the whisper of the devil in me." Such lucidity of scruple produces a valuable alertness in the conscience of a writer, but it also leads to a serious enervation of tone, force, and unity in his narrative and to the exaggerated preciosity which is the major weakness of this book. "The Pilgrim Hawk" is by way of being a serious assessment of talent and purpose; in what it does to sublimate the aesthetic inflation and self-regard of Wescott's earlier work it indicates a fresh discipline that may recover the exquisite pastoral lyricism of "The Apple of the Eye" and direct it to finer uses. The question hangs in suspense. The book indicates a renewal of courage and critical insight in its author, but in itself it tests and exercises, rather than masters, the faculties that have given us the finest examples of modern fable.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

On Getting Tough

AMERICA'S LAST CHANCE. By Albert Carr. Thomas Y. Crowell Company. $2.75.

THE hour of decision was over before the election. On the one essential point, the defense of liberty, the two candidates were of one mind. We are committed; the danger lies in our refusal to admit it, even to ourselves. We are drifting fast into world action, but we are drifting sideways or even backward, still crying peace, neutrality, and isolation when not a shred of these remains. It is this insincerity that Albert Carr would dispel. Isolation is gone; participation as a mere auxiliary is the kind of entanglement most contrary to our traditions, our interests, and our principles. The remaining alternative, the only one worthy of our power and of our ideal, is leadership. We alone can "end war" and "make the world safe for democracy." This is our great opportunity, our second chance. It may be our last.

"End war! Save democracy!" We have sneered for twenty years at these promises. Even today the anti-Wilsonian bias is the chief obstacle to clear thinking and determined action. We must first confess that our cynicism was wrong, and that the despised "idealists" were the only true realists. "America," says Mr. Carr, "betrayed the world and herself twenty years before the inadequate old gentleman with the umbrella tried in good faith to postpone Armageddon." "For the American betrayal of 1919 there can be no extenuation. Each year that has elapsed has made the crime against humanity blacker, more sinister." Yesterday this would have been *vox clamantis in deserto.* Even today these are courageous words.

We are still hampered by the anti-Wilsonian propaganda of the last two decades. We are hampered also by the activities of those men who are at heart with the Nazis and against the democracies, those fifth columnists who paralyzed and betrayed France. As in France, they are an odd coalition, and the most insidious elements among them are those conservatives who "fear that the defeat of Germany would give over Western Europe to a socialist revolution. To such a possibility they find world Nazism infinitely preferable." "Smashing dangerous organizations," however, is perilous in a democracy. Carr offers two excellent rules. The first is that "a democratic government, even in peace time, has every right to insist upon a monopoly of force." "It should not hesitate to suppress groups set up for organized intimidation, like the Ku Klux Klan." The second is that "no organization should be dissolved unless it has proved its menace to democracy by a record of overt acts." Let this have a place in our Bill of Rights.

The worst cause of confusion, according to Carr, is our "tender-mindedness," the wishful thinking which prompted us to "outlaw war" without first creating world law. His longest chapter is entitled We Need to Get Tough. I gladly indorse the idea, but, with all respect to William James, I object to the words. "Tough" is too easily confused with "rough," "raw," or "coarse." Gangsters, and cynics, are "tough." We need to make our thinking stronger through greater refinement. Reality is tangled. It is "tough" in the wrong sense of the term to dismiss Nazism as "the revolution of nihilism." Much of the excellent and very definite program proposed by Albert Carr was anticipated by the Nazis; on this point Mrs. Lindbergh has a lesson for us. It is "tough" to bracket together Germany and Russia; in Russia the dictatorship is not a permanent principle, and the imperialistic virus has been reduced to a minimum. I fully agree with Carr that "in fact, if England with American aid can throw back the Nazi attack, it will be important to have an understanding with Russia well before the collapse of Germany. For America to reject Russian cooperation would be a piece of ignorant folly."

Frankly, Carr's book is journalistic in tone, and certain references to history, literature, or philosophy are rather crude. But the thought is cogent and the presentation vigorous. I have a professional bias in favor of a more cautious and more subtle treatment. But I know how hopelessly wrong the sophisticates are apt to be. Between the exquisite culture of the French Academy and the avowed "toughness" of Albert Carr I do not hesitate. As La Bruyère said more than two hundred years ago: "If it comes to a choice, *je veux être peuple*" (I want to be with the people).

ALBERT GUÉRARD

The Talk of Ezra Pound

CANTOS LII-LXXI. By Ezra Pound. New Directions. $2.50.

"THERE is no other poetry like the Cantos in English. And there is none quite so simple in form." So Allen Tate has written and then added of Ezra Pound: "The secret of his form is this: conversation." To take this view of the Cantos is very valuable, for no other explains so well the power of Pound's allusions. The formal approach is conversational; the secret of the form is another matter and as yet hidden in the recesses of Pound's mind. Say, then, that what we have is talk, talk of men and of arms, of men who fought and got the credit for it, and of those who also fought, as desperately and as bravely fought, and got no name for it, the companions of Ulysses who did not hear how sweetly the sirens sang, and for all their pains had only the recollection of ear wax and of pulling at the oars.

> And they wanted to know what we talked about?
> *"de litteris et de armis, praestantibus ingeniis,*

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Both of ancient times and our own; books, arms,
And men of unusual genius
Both of ancient times and our own, in short the usual subjects
Of conversation between intelligent men."

An epic, Pound has said, "is a poem containing history." His poem, which slowly attains the length of an epic, contains a great deal of history—not the text of the historians, but only so much of history, of ancient times and our own, as may agreeably enter the conversation of intelligent men. For in good conversation the text must not enter; only a bore would think of bringing it in. What is best in conversation is the marginal comment, the text itself being taken for granted among the listeners. At most a complete anecdote may be introduced, because it is pertinent, or simply because at the moment it seems amusing; a singularly happy or telling phrase may be quoted, a document or a translation of a poem brought out and shown; the rest is all illustration, personal exposition and interpretation—and, in Pound's case, imaginative marginalia.

The new Cantos are longer-winded than any that have gone before. Chinese history is sustained as a subject through the first ten Cantos of the present volume; through the rest the character and career of John Adams are under consideration. All depends here upon allusion; not to know the text of Pound's talk is to miss most of the points he is making. The Cantos are not imaginative as they once were. And yet to read them is to hear again the old talk in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs, in the studio back of the courtyard, under the high window that cast no shadow until twilight, with Pound lolling in his home-made armchair, with an air of weariness, like a strong man worn out by the stupidities of the world, his mind unwearied, his soul unbelieving, but still his own. Pound has his own particular *hubris,* his pride, not lofty like that of Capaneus, to whom he once compared himself, but still unpersuadable, not to be put down. "There's not a wheel," he once said to me, "can go low enough to crush me." Out of his rut he utters his defiance, not against the gods, for there are no longer gods to defy, but against the great of this world, against the powerful who have put "money-lust above the pleasures of the senses."

There was always something about Pound of the sailor returned to tell of the strange sights he had seen, airing as he talked the strange tongues he had learned; but the limpness of the long body in the chair betrayed that it was not from actual seas he had come. The mind was his Mediterranean, whose shores are alive with antiquity, above whose islands the clouds still seem to rise in mythopoeic shapes. There history accumulates and none can quite escape the presence of the past, which strikes, like light from a wall, at the passer-by. Outside, as we talked, was Paris, and that present which has now become a past.

That was in the winter of 1922-23, when I was trying to read the Provençal poets, word by word, with the aid of an incomplete dictionary. And Pound told me how he, as a young man, had pondered over one word whose meaning he could not make out or find anywhere, and how at last someone had told him that there was one man in Europe who would know if anybody did, and how he had set out and crossed half of Germany to find old Lévy, all for that one word. I heard the story then; it is now set down in its place in the Cantos. And I remember one night after dinner, when the Beaune was finished and we had begun on the brandy, that I told Pound the story of the British and the goddamned Portagoose. And that, too, is now in the Cantos, and the word, which was a corruption of soldiers in the last war, has become a permanent part of the Pound vocabulary, so that it now appears, even when it is with the seventeenth-century Chinese that the Portuguese have to do.

And the Portagoose king sent an envoy
and they cured Kang Hi with wine from the Canaries
w'ich putt 'em up a jot higher.

It is hard to get the point of the spelling in the last line, as it is to understand why John Adams of Braintree should from time to time drop into the drawl of a West which did not exist in his day. It is hard, that is, when we receive the words from the printed page; and yet it is precisely the deformation of the words on the page that brings back for me the unforgettable voice, so determined in the midst of Europe not to lose its native accent that it constantly assumed a speech which might well pass for American among Europeans, but which, to a compatriot's ear, belonged to no America that ever was.

In those lines I hear the talk, impatient and unwearied, polyglot and full of queer quirks, surprising and in the long run consistent, either wonderfully right or preposterously wrong, always generous and always limited.

It was limited, no matter who the listener, to what Pound was interested in. I remember once discussing with him those passages in the "Divine Comedy" which are in themselves so dull that I could only conceive that Dante had brought them in because they in some way contributed to the structure of his poem. "Wa'al," said Pound, "they may not interest you. But I think you can be sure that Dante put nothing into the 'Divine Comedy' that did not interest him."

Now the same thing can be said of Pound's Cantos. Nothing is there that has not at some time interested Pound, and it is probably vain to look for any other reason for its being there. The complexity of the poem is due to the complexity of a contemporary mind; and so is its incoherence. He has long been interested in Chinese civilization; he is now, like everybody else, interested in what constitutes good government. His account of China, covering all the dynasties, from the first, which is more or less mythical, down to the Manchus, is constructed so as to set forth Pound's distinction between good governments and bad. His John Adams is presented as "the clearest head in Congress," as

the man who at certain points
made us
at certain points
saved us
by *fairness, honesty,* and *straight moving.*

Adams is also presented as a man who at certain points was in complete accord with Ezra Pound.

Pound has recently been credited with being a fascist. It is true that he continues to live in Italy and that he has spoken with more toleration of Mussolini than I, for one, would have expected. But no man can be a consistent admirer of

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fascism who holds John Adams in admiration. And that Pound clearly does.

Whether he is speaking of Chinese emperors or of Adams and his contemporaries, Pound sees the misuse of money on the part of the governors as the root of most of the evils with which the governed are afflicted. It is not only on the opening page but throughout these Cantos that he pleads for an understanding of the true base of credit, that is, "the abundance of nature/with the whole folk behind it." Somewhere behind the poet is Major Douglas. How sound Pound's position may be as an exponent of Social Credit, I cannot say; what can be said is that his concentration on economics has simplified his morality, which was already a little too simple, while his concern with the money-lust of others has caused him, as a poet, to neglect the pleasures of the senses. He announced some years ago that he was thinking of giving up poetry in order to write economics. He has not given up his poetic method. In these Cantos the poet has compromised with the economist; it is a proof of Pound's superb versatility that the poet comes out as well as he does.

JOHN PEALE BISHOP

John Dewey

THE PHILOSOPHER OF THE COMMON MAN. Essays in Honor of John Dewey to Celebrate His Eightieth Birthday. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.75.

THIS beautifully bound book was a birthday gift to Professor Dewey. Each essay records the writer's indebtedness and devotion to him. Most of them, not all, are simply congratulatory accounts of certain aspects of Dewey's thought. Appearing separately, the sentimental, uncritical portions of the volume might be accepted as understandable emotional responses to the occasion. But coming as they do in the midst of a flood of flattering portraits of Dewey, some of the essays take on an unfortunate significance. They fit in too neatly with the canonization of Dewey carried on by his more active disciples. At present there are quarters in which dissent from Professor Dewey calls forth the most astonishing charges. Lack of piety has been the standard accusation, and if some of the most zealous have their way, un-Americanism and treason to the common man will undoubtedly be added to the list.

It should not be necessary to preface all remarks which are critical of Dewey with a recitation of one's admiration for him and one's respect for his philosophical greatness. But apparently one must, and so it should be said again that Dewey's recognition of logic as an instrument of inquiry, his emphasis upon the biological and cultural context of thought, his belief that the great problem of our time is the construction of a free society—all these mark him as one of our greatest thinkers. Nevertheless, to disregard the need for coordinating Dewey's theory of inquiry with the powerful weapons of mathematical logic, to insist that Dewey's analysis of continuity needs no further examination, to urge that he has presented a working political program—these are attitudes of blind subservience. Fortunately, some contributors to the volume participate in the free and critical intelligence espoused by Dewey, even when the subject is

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Dewey himself. Arthur Murphy, Ernest Nagel, and J. H. Randall, Jr., present detailed critiques of Dewey's views on philosophy, logic, and religion.

Dr. Hu Shih tries to extract a systematic political philosophy from Dewey's writings. To this end he selects two papers written in 1916. At the time Dewey argued: "Force is the only thing in the world which effects anything, and literally to substitute law for force would be as intelligent as to try to run an engine on the mathematical formula which states its most efficient running." The problem for Dewey in 1916 was how to use force rationally. Today the only effective thing in the world has either lost its sting or gained too much. No longer is force involved in every intelligent act, but, on the contrary, Dewey urges us to "take as far as possible every conflict which arises . . . out of the atmosphere and medium of force, of violence as a means of settlement, into that of discussion and intelligence." It is clear that the positions have more than a time-span between them. Either they are logically incompatible or Dewey has revised his terminology completely. The earlier view conceived intelligence as a rational directing of force, and defined violence as "force running wild." Now Dewey not only identifies force and violence but explicitly counterposes force and intelligence. For this reason it would appear that no political instrumentalism built upon the 1916 postulates could be accepted by Dewey today. One sympathizes with Dr. Hu Shih's uneasiness in the matter. Dewey, he ventures, "for some unknown reason, has apparently never taken up nor continued to develop this instrumentalist line of political thought during the last quarter of a century."

MORTON G. WHITE

The First Year

THE WAR: FIRST YEAR. By Edgar McInnis. Introduction by Raymond Gram Swing. Oxford University Press. $1.50.

THE writing of contemporary history is a difficult task. The prejudices and biases which color the reporting in our newspapers make true objectivity a myth and stand in the way of a penetrating interpretation of events. In the face of these difficulties Professor McInnis has done an extremely good job. The first year of the war is presented with the scrupulous accuracy of the professional historian. It is all here: the blundering of Allied diplomacy on the eve of the conflict, the *Blitzkrieg* in Poland, the surprising inaction on the western front, the Finnish campaign with the plans for Allied intervention which never came off, the Norwegian campaign, and the final assault on France. The book closes with the beginning of the Battle of Britain, in which the RAF is already proving more than a match for Göring's famed *Luftwaffe*. Although Professor McInnis, a Canadian, can hardly be indifferent to the outcome of these stirring events, he describes them with almost complete detachment. Writing with the full knowledge of the year's developments, he is able to weave many happenings that seemed disconnected and unintelligible at the time into a pattern which gives them new significance. As an aid in interpreting the year's events as a whole, Raymond Gram Swing's brilliant introduction deserves special mention. It does what all introductions are intended to do but few really achieve—contributes an integration and direction to the book which are highly useful.

MAXWELL S. STEWART

Finney of Johns Hopkins

A SURGEON'S LIFE. By J. M. T. Finney. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.50.

IT WOULD seem that surgeons have turned to autobiography. Two have appeared within the past month, four or five within the past year or so. Some of these have fulfilled the hopes of those who were wishing that mine enemy would write a book and have done neither their authors nor surgery much credit.

Not so this one by John Finney of Johns Hopkins. With supreme restraint and modesty Dr. Finney records the outstanding events in his long and influential life in four hundred pages of simple, unpretentious English, interpolating innumerable interesting anecdotes—and occasional mediocre poems. Early in life, he says, he realized that he must have equanimity, and he made every effort to cultivate it. In this he magnificently succeeded. His dignity and his great humanity shine from every page without the slightest effort on the part of the author. If every young surgeon would read this book and take its author as his ideal, the prestige of surgery would rise even higher and the usefulness of autobiographies would be reinforced.

KARL MENNINGER

On the Contrary

ULTIMA THULE. By Vilhjalmur Stefansson. The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

STEFANSSON is an amusingly contrary scholar. Once he had proved, to the annoyance of the dietary pundits, that white men in Polar regions could live well on meat alone he proceeded to show convincingly in "The Friendly Arctic" that those slandered lands were truly hospitable. His new book is an addendum to the "Unsolved Mysteries of the Arctic" published a couple of years ago, a contentious but delightful presentation of certain problems which have distressed cosmographers since Pytheas in 300 B.C. returned to Massilia with an account of having visited Ultima Thule. Did he mean Iceland or Norway? Did he voyage beyond Britain at all? Columbus next excited the derision of the non-navigating scientists when he too claimed to have visited Iceland in 1477 and to have sailed some three hundred miles north of it through warm weather and a sea clear of ice, but Mr. Stefansson deftly converts the evidence still against him into fair corroboration of his tale. The final third of the book is devoted to Arctic climate with proof aplenty that it is not only pleasant during the summer season but conducive to sunburn and the bursting of thermometers gauged to only 120 degrees. The cosmographers, I feel, are here confounded, for Mr. Stefansson, the Munchausen's advocate, is not merely a wily writer and a scholar of caution, but a soundly scientific explorer who knows by contact the lands whereof he writes.

HASSOLDT DAVIS

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IN BRIEF

FOREIGN DEVILS IN THE FLOWERY KINGDOM. By Carl Crow. Harper and Brothers. $3.

Like the author's "400,000,000 Customers" this is a warm and perceptive book on China. Here Mr. Crow deals primarily with the delicate problems of relationship between the Chinese and the "foreign devils," a term which once included missionaries, traders, beachcombers, diplomats, and prostitutes of all the nations that have sought to exploit the Orient. Carefully and humorously he traces our dealings with China from the old days when American ginseng and fur were traded for tea to the bombing of Shanghai in 1938. The book is anecdotal, swiftly paced, nostalgic, and of sound value for those concerned with current directions in the East.

THE FIRE OX AND OTHER YEARS. By Suydam Cutting. Charles Scribner's Sons. $5.

Physically this is the ideal travel book, superbly illustrated with photographs, three-tone maps, and color reproductions of paintings. It is the story of the author's journeys over the 18,000-foot passes of the Himalayas and among the head-hunters of Assam, the pigmies of the Andaman Islands, the hinterland tribes of Ethiopia, and the lamas of Lhasa, whom he visited in 1937, "the fire-ox year." Mr. Cutting gives us few of the thrills purveyed spectacularly by the average author-adventurer, but since he made these trips under museum auspices and prepared for them by years of scientific research, his stories may be respected for the information they give regarding the world's least accessible regions and for their spirit of what is happily termed "creative travel."

THE LIFE OF MY MOTHER. By Oskar Maria Graf. Howell, Soskin and Company. $2.75.

A "biographical novel" by a self-exiled German writer, commemorating an iron-willed Bavarian peasant woman who grew up in the days when King Ludwig II was burning incense to the musical genius of Wagner. The Franco-Prussian War, the rise of the German Empire and its arrogant military caste, the first World War's aftermath of social turmoil, the advent of Hitler and the Nazi juggernaut—all these, and their impact on the author's family, are pictured honestly and movingly.

DRAMA

Mr. Molnar Blows a Bubble

"DELICATE STORY" (Henry Miller's Theater) begins with a conversation between three young men of unspecified nationality. They are residents of Switzerland who have just been ordered to report to the army of their country within four weeks, and they are wondering what a young man ought to do with his last month on earth. It is not hard to guess that they agree upon Wine, Women, and Song, with the emphasis where it ought to be. And since the author is Ferenc Molnar it is also not difficult to guess that the ensuing events are not the tragic ones which a younger man would have imagined. Mr. Molnar is a refugee whose refusal to be "deepened" by unhappy experiences will doubtless be resented by many, but perhaps it would be fairer to admire the fact that he seems to have lost nothing of his suave insouciance. Starting with the war, he soon finds himself where he has always found himself—with a triangle on his hands and deeply absorbed in the problem of making a very old situation yield new amusement. The most delicate thing about "Delicate Story" is its balance exactly midway between sentiment and cynicism and exactly midway between naivete and sophistication.

Mary Cristof, pretty and thoroughly domestic young wife of a delicatessen-store keeper, falls in love with one of the three young men and feels it her pleasant duty to give him the weeks of happiness he so obviously deserves. If it is right for him to demand such happiness it can hardly be wrong for her to supply it, even though, as her common-sense husband insists when he finally discovers what is up, "you cannot count that form of entertainment as sacrifice." The final twist should not be given away, but the play evolves as a quietly farcical conflict between the wife and the husband, who have such personal reasons for their different estimates of the motives of all the others. Obviously the central situation might conceivably be developed in a purely sentimental fashion and Mrs. Cristof—a very pleasant little person—taken strictly at her own valuation. Obviously also the latter might be treated as Somerset Maugham treated the heroine of "Too Many Husbands" when he enlarged upon her complacent conviction that she had done rather more than her bit during the first World War by marrying two recipients of the Victoria Cross. But Mr. Molnar is never downright, and nobody is ever judged. In fact, all his dexterity is devoted to the task of keeping the fundamental issue as unclear in the mind of the audience as it is in the mind of the heroine.

Even the most practiced butterfly-breaker might well hesitate to attempt dissection of the play, which is a good deal less substantial than the airiest of the lepidoptera. It is not a ball that the author keeps rolling but a soap bubble suspended; and when it bursts there is not much left. To me at least it was, nevertheless, pretty enough while it lasted, and though the piece got a rather chilly reception from a section of the press, my guess is that this is one of the cases where the public will reverse the judgment of the critics if only it gives itself an opportunity to make up its own mind. Certainly the production is all that anyone could ask for. Edna Best, as Mrs. Cristof, plays with a simplicity and warmth combined with a fine sense of comedy which makes it almost impossible to imagine anyone else in the role. All the other parts are expertly played and directed, with special mention clearly earned by Jay Fassett as the husband and Harry Gribbon as the police captain in a scene only remotely connected with the rest of the play but probably the funniest five minutes of the whole evening.

Holiday Suggestions

Boys and Girls Together. Broadhurst Theater. Mostly Ed Wynn, who has never been better. My choice among all the musical shows.

Cabin in the Sky. Martin Beck Theater. The admirable Ethel Waters and some good dancers in a highly synthetic fantasy which is a good deal less in the spirit of "Green Pastures" than it would like to be.

Charley's Aunt. Cort Theater. Improbable as it may seem, this very spirited revival of an old chestnut provides one of the most hilarious evenings to be had on Broadway.

Delicate Story. Henry Miller's Theater. Reviewed in this issue.

Hold on to Your Hats. Shubert Theater. Mostly Al Jolson in a reminiscent mood but with a good deal of assistance from Martha Ray. It all depends on how much you like Mr. Jolson.

Johnny Belinda. Longacre Theater. Fisher-folk melodrama with a deaf-and-dumb child of nature as heroine.

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The public likes it better than most of the critics did. Helen Craig acts it for all it is worth and even a bit more.

Life with Father. Empire Theater. In its second year and the best comedy now running.

Louisiana Purchase. Imperial Theater. Irving Berlin-Morrie Ryskind satire on political corruption with more emphasis on music and sex than on politics. Victor Moore as innocent and as sad as ever. Also William Gaxton and Zorina.

Panama Hattie. Forty-sixth Street Theater. Most elaborate of the new musicals, with songs by Cole Porter and with Ethel Merman as a sweetheart of the navy. Rowdy, bawdy, and in the opinion of some better than last year's "Du Barry Was a Lady." I didn't laugh as much.

The Corn Is Green. National Theater. Ethel Barrymore and an unusually good company in a pleasant play about a school teacher and a Welsh pit boy whom she sends to Oxford. Might be heavy but isn't. Well worth seeing.

Twelfth Night. St. James Theater. One of the less substantial of Shakespeare's plays made into a thoroughly delightful evening. Maurice Evans is amusing as a cockney Malvolio, and Helen Hayes could hardly be better. Another distinctly successful step in the movement to bring Shakespeare back to the public.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RECORDS

GOOD things from Victor are the Coolidge Quartets set of Beethoven's Opus 18 No. 5 (Set 716, $3); and Dusolina Giannini's record of "Casta Diva" from Bellini's "Norma" (17503, $1), on which the music is phrased more beautifully than on any of the others, and which was made at a time when Giannini's voice was still adequate to her musicianship (it is less successful with the difficulties of "Ah! bello a me ritorna" on the reverse side). On the one record of the concluding first-act duet that I have heard of the new Victor set of "Madama Butterfly" Toti dal Monte's voice sounds quite unpleasant, and Gigli's has the power, and at times the strain, that have replaced his former velvety ease.

Personally I would choose the old record of Toscanini's performance of Dukas's "L'apprenti sorcier," which sounds amazingly good on a high-fidelity machine, in preference to the new Victor set (717, $2.50) of Stokowski's performance with the Philadelphia Orchestra, which is gorgeous-sounding but dramatically overemphatic to the point of distorting plastic proportions. E. Power Biggs's performances would cause me to do without the Chorale Preludes in the third and concluding set (711, $2.50) of Bach's "Little Organ Book." I would also do without Mussorgsky's song-cycle, "The Nursery" (Set 686, $2.75), as sung by Igor Gorin—in English this time, but with a disturbing foreign accent, with a fine baritone voice that is not suited to the musical utterance of a little boy, a little girl, their nurse, their mother, and in a heavily sentimental and lachrymose style. Even Flagstad's beautiful singing and phrasing do not make Grieg's song-cycle, "Haugtussa" (Set 714, $4.50), mean to me what it evidently means to her. But although Rachmaninov's music is something I usually avoid, I will listen when it is one of his piano concertos with Rachmaninov himself at the piano—when, that is, it is music written by Rachmaninov the composer out of the very hand of Rachmaninov the pianist, and when the pianist's incisive, dramatic style of playing makes this music the exciting thing it is in the Victor set (710, $5) of the Concerto No. 3, the best of the series, which Rachmaninov has recorded with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy.

The Sibelius anniversary is celebrated in a way that will do Sibelius little good—with Victor recordings of the appalling incidental music to "Belshazzar's Feast," well done by Kajanus with the London Symphony (Set 715, $2.50), the inferior Romance Opus 42, also well done by Boult and the B. B. C. Symphony (13499, $1), and the songs "Svarta Rosor" and "Saf, Saf, Susa," well sung by Bjoerling (4531, $.75); and with Columbia's set (423, $4.50) of a performance of the Symphony No. 2 by Barbirolli and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony—a performance in which there is a constant straining for momentary effect unrestrained by any sense for continuity, and in which the momentary effects so achieved exaggerate the work's own structural discontinuities, its own lapses into rhetoric and bombast, and destroy the moderately enjoyable effect of its less pretentious pages. From the sound of the orchestra on these records—its greater depth and body and warmth—it is evident that Columbia has done things to correct the faults in its first recordings of the New York Philharmonic and American Youth Orchestras that it claimed were in my Scott machine; but it is also evident that Columbia will have to do more things before it achieves the refinement and balance that are to be heard on its imported records (Set X-180, $2.50) of Beecham's excellent performance of Grieg's "Peer Gynt" Suite No. 1—to say nothing of what is to be heard on Stokowski's Victor records of "L'apprenti sorcier." Columbia has, however, succeeded in doing a good recording job with the Budapest Quartet's superlative performance of Ravel's Quartet (Set 425, $4.50); and reassured on that point we can sit back and wait for a better piece of music. For the rest Columbia offers Humperdinck's charming Overture, Dream Pantomime, and Waltz from "Hänsel and Gretel," well played by the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony under Barlow, and a little brassily recorded (Set 424, $2.75); Bartók's Rhapsody No. 1, completely uninteresting to me, but superbly played by Szigeti and Bartók (11410-D, $1); and Brahms's own two-piano arrangement of his Variations on a Theme of Haydn, which, though well played by Bartlett and Robertson (Set X-181, $2.50), does not give me the enjoyment I get from the original work for orchestra.

The set of Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony made by Bruno Walter with the Vienna Philharmonic a few years ago has been issued by Victor as a Black Label Classic (Set G-20, $4). The performance is very fine, but blurred occasionally by reverberant but otherwise good recording. I would pay the additional $1.50 for the Toscanini set.

Both the tenor and soprano in the National Committee set of "La Traviata" are afflicted with strong tremolos and are otherwise mediocre; the baritone is better; the recording is coarse. In the "Lohengrin" one encounters quite the best voices thus far (no Flagstads, though); and they are as good in the "Tannhäuser," with the exception of the Elisabeth. Her singing of "Dich, teure Halle" on the second side is underrecorded; and the first side sounds badly overcut.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Religion and Democracy

Dear Sirs: I wish to applaud Miss Kirchwey's splendid editorial on Religion and Democracy in the November 30 issue of *The Nation*. We are constantly reminded by press and radio and by our national leaders that only a revival of faith and a return to God can save us from catastrophe. Reason seems to be entirely discarded. Evidently our leaders, in default of constructive thought, fall back upon the meaningless vaporings of "faith," "religion," and "spiritual values." They disregard the fact that everything of value that has thus far been achieved has been the result of real thinking about real facts. I regret to note, however, that Miss Kirchwey deviates somewhat from her logical conclusion. In saying that she "does not deny the validity of religious feeling," she indulges, however briefly, in the same meaningless words of which our press, radio, and leaders are guilty.

The Nation is to be congratulated on its stand to bring home to its readers the necessity for sound thought and reason. Professor La Piana's article in the same issue emphasizes this point. I see no immediate hope that the general press will join *The Nation* in this crusade for logical thought at a critical moment in our lives, but all liberal journals should try to secure that reason shall become a reality in human affairs.

BENJAMIN L. GROSSMAN

New York, December 10

Dear Sirs: I cannot refrain from raising a cheer for Freda Kirchwey's Religion and Democracy. Hers is the first voice to speak out against what seems to me to be one of the most alarming tendencies of our times—a tendency to return to religious obscurantism to solve, or rather to help us to escape from, our troubles.

When I hear a person resorting to prayer for a solution of our political and economic difficulties I cannot help putting that person down as to some degree unreliable and unsound. I do not deny that prayer may have some validity —as a spiritual expression or desire. But there has always seemed to me to be a distinct difference between prayer in behalf of a broken spirit and prayer in behalf of a broken leg. When one resorts to prayer in behalf of political and economic problems I think it is like praying for broken legs.

Mr. Roosevelt's increased use of religious references in his speeches has been disquieting to me. He made some such reference in his first inaugural address, but I then had the impression that he was just kidding the public along. Now I am afraid he really means it. The other day, in his letter commending Mr. Wallace as his special envoy to Señor Cárdenas, Roosevelt ended as follows: "May God have Your Excellency in his safe and holy keeping." That was maudlin, and silly, and also rather funny, for as it happens Señor Cárdenas is certainly a skeptic and probably an agnostic. Incidentally, the one serious reservation I have about Henry Wallace is that he is much too religious.

CHARLES CURTIS MUNZ

San Antonia, Tex., December 7

Dear Sirs: With regard to Freda Kirchwey's editorial in the November 30 issue in which she seeks to show that religion has nothing to do with democracy, it seems to me that her reasoning, like the religious impulse, is "fluid."

When it is convenient she seems to identify Christianity with certain vicious practices of the Roman hierarchy; then again, by implication, she identifies Christianity with certain perversions of the "religious impulse." And she writes off Protestant Christianity as a total loss because it has so many sects.

She does not take the trouble to mention that Jesus put the major emphasis of his teaching and his life on the worth of the individual and his relation to the heavenly Father; and that he himself sought, and commissioned his disciples to work for, a world brotherhood of believers in the faith and way of life. He insisted that the Golden Rule must be made to function by men of good-will.

Certainly "the religious impulse is a fluid." Misdirected by ignorant and vicious leaders and teachers, it becomes hideous and destructive. Guided by "the mind of Christ" it becomes the source of the highest and best in all human relations. This nation was founded by men and women who fled the spiritual tyranny of the Old World, men imbued with the spirit of him who said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

I think Mr. Roosevelt has the vision to see that unless we, their children, have the devotion to the spirit and life of Christ that drove our spiritual fathers into the bleak wilderness of New England and inspired them to lay the foundations there of our free institutions, we shall lose our freedom.

Because some distorted outgrowths of the religious impulse have been used "as an opiate to keep the people under," why discount the essential value to our democracy of a living faith in the religion of Jesus? E. A. MOORE

Des Moines, Iowa, December 6

Dear Sirs: I should like to express my appreciation of your excellent editorial Religion and Democracy. It seems to me that there would be far less nonsense about the war as a struggle of "embattled Christianity against the Nazi infidels" if Hitler's own religious attitude were more generally known. But of course obscurantism in this connection has been deliberately fostered by the churches, especially the Roman Catholic church.

William Teeling, himself a Catholic, writes as follows on page 127 of his book, "Crisis for Christianity" (London; 1939): "Herr Hitler [on July 2, 1933] made an official public statement that he is a member of the Roman Catholic church. It may be pointed out that, up to the moment of my writing this book, Hitler has never publicly gone back on that statement."

Not only has Hitler never gone back on that declaration of faith, but in October, 1935, he again put himself on record as a Catholic. In a letter which appeared in the London *Literary Guide* for February, 1940, I wrote:

> Rationalists should be prepared to refute the mendacious allegation that Adolf Hitler is an atheist or a pagan. He is a Roman Catholic. (1) He was baptized a Catholic; (2) he has never left the Catholic church; (3) he has never been excommunicated; and (4) what is most significant, he calls himself a Catholic.
>
> My authority for the last statement is Hitler himself. The most recent edition of the German "Who's Who" ("Wer Ist's?") appeared in Hitler's Reich in October, 1935, more than two years after his assumption of power. In his autobiographical sketch—which, in keeping with the Führer's dignity, precedes all the other sketches in the volume —Hitler designates his religious affiliations as *kath.* Reference to the table of abbreviations (*Verzeichnis der Abkürzungen*) shows

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that *kath.* stands for *katholisch*—that is, Catholic.

History abounds in examples of Roman Catholics who have been in conflict with their own ecclesiastical authorities while remaining within the fold of the Catholic church. History, unless it is falsified, will add Hitler's name to this long list of contentious Catholics.

ALEXANDER KADISON

New York, December 10

Dear Sirs: I have just read Religion and Democracy by Freda Kirchwey and find it unsatisfactory. It is full of half-truths and inadequate statements.

"Democracy has nothing on earth to do with any particular faith." I maintain that democracy is directly opposed to certain particular faiths and in harmony with others.

"Christianity may nourish democracy or dictatorship." That depends upon what you mean by Christianity. The teachings of Jesus do not nourish dictatorship.

Religious motivation for the democratic ideal has played a large part in history and will probably become a still more effective force. For some of us it is the only adequate basis for our hopes.

Miss Kirchwey objects to use of the religious appeal by President Roosevelt and Dorothy Thompson. Another person whose life and views are motivated by religious convictions to a greater extent than either of those two is Henry A. Wallace.

JOHN C. GRANBERY,
of the *Emancipator*

Georgetown, Tex., December 9

Our War Against Persecution

Dear Sirs: One reason why we must continue to help others while we can in these tough times is that no man or woman on earth is safe from that sudden turn in the fortunes of war that can change him overnight from a citizen with a place in the world, a home, a farm, a job, a business, into a starving, itching, freezing, helpless piece of roadside litter—a refugee. None of us knows when our turn may come. If it does come, our only hope will lie in the frail web of understanding of one man for the pain of another. Every time we dig into our pockets to help somebody less fortunate than ourselves we strengthen that web.

We all know, and we try for our sleep's sake not to be always remembering it, that all over Europe today are huddled groups of refugees from political and national and racial persecutions. They are dying by inches in barbed-wire pens. Many of them have been saved so far from the firing squad only by the fact that there are so many names on the dictators' proscription lists that their turn hasn't come yet. The only way of saving them so that they'll stay saved is to get them out of Europe and into the Americas.

We mustn't forget that we are ringed with enemies. Only the refugees are our friends. By and large it is because they think as Americans think, because they have worked and fought for the things Americans believe in, that they are suffering.

As treasurer of the Joint Campaign for Political Refugees, in which the International Relief Association and the New World Resettlement Fund are cooperating, I appeal to your readers for contributions. All money raised will be immediately applied to getting refugees out of Europe. In my opinion these organizations are under no political influence and have the experience and the devoted personnel necessary to produce results with a minimum of overhead.

The first check in Hitler's sweep of victories came when the British, working as individuals in small groups any way they could, using tugs, dredges, trawlers, motor boats, canoes, any craft that could be kept afloat, crossed the Channel to Dunkirk and saved the main part of their defeated army. Then we knew the old Queen of the Seas was not dead. When we in America prove that we can salvage the magnificent human material in the defeated armies of anti-fascism, it will be the first turn of the tide in the greater war of humanity against persecution.

Contributions may be sent to me at 2 West Forty-third Street, New York.

JOHN DOS PASSOS, Treasurer

New York, December 13

Liberate These Men!

Dear Sirs: Christmas time approaches with four innocent union miners serving the tenth year of a life term in Kentucky. These are the Harlan County men convicted on a false charge of conspiracy to murder, following the Evarts battle on May 5, 1931, precipitated when coal-company mine guards attacked a strike picket line with machine-guns.

On November 26, the American Federation of Labor, in convention at New Orleans, unanimously passed a resolution calling on Governor Johnson of Kentucky to grant immediate pardons to all four. This resolution reminded the Governor that "proof of wholesale perjury, intimidation of defense witnesses, and other new evidence secured after the trials so clearly established the innocence of these prisoners that forty-six of forty-seven living jurors and two of the three trial judges signed petitions urging pardons." That proof is in Governor Johnson's hands. With it is an affidavit by Mrs. Jim Daniels, widow of the chief mine guard killed, in which, for excellent reasons, she voices her belief that the four prisoners are innocent.

Your readers could perform a vital service by writing or telegraphing to Governor Keen Johnson, Frankfort, Kentucky, asking him to liberate these men—W. B. Jones, Chester Poore, Jim Reynolds, and Al Benson—and let them go home to their families for Christmas. Copies, or the gist, of such letters, should be sent to Herbert Mahler, secretary of the Kentucky Miners' Defense, 75 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

MORRIS SHAPIRO

New York, December 10

CONTRIBUTORS

RAYMOND GRAM SWING is the nationally famous commentator on foreign affairs. His article is based on "The Choice of Freedom," a John Hope lecture delivered at Atlanta University on December 12.

ROSE M. STEIN, author of "M-Day," has written extensively on labor problems.

JOACHIM JOESTEN, a German liberal journalist, prophesied the invasion of Denmark in his "Rats in the Larder," published in January, 1939. Forced to flee from Denmark when the Nazis entered, he has just arrived in Central America.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL is the author of "Literary Opinion in America."

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JOHN PEALE BISHOP, poet and critic, regularly reviews poetry for *The Nation.*

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